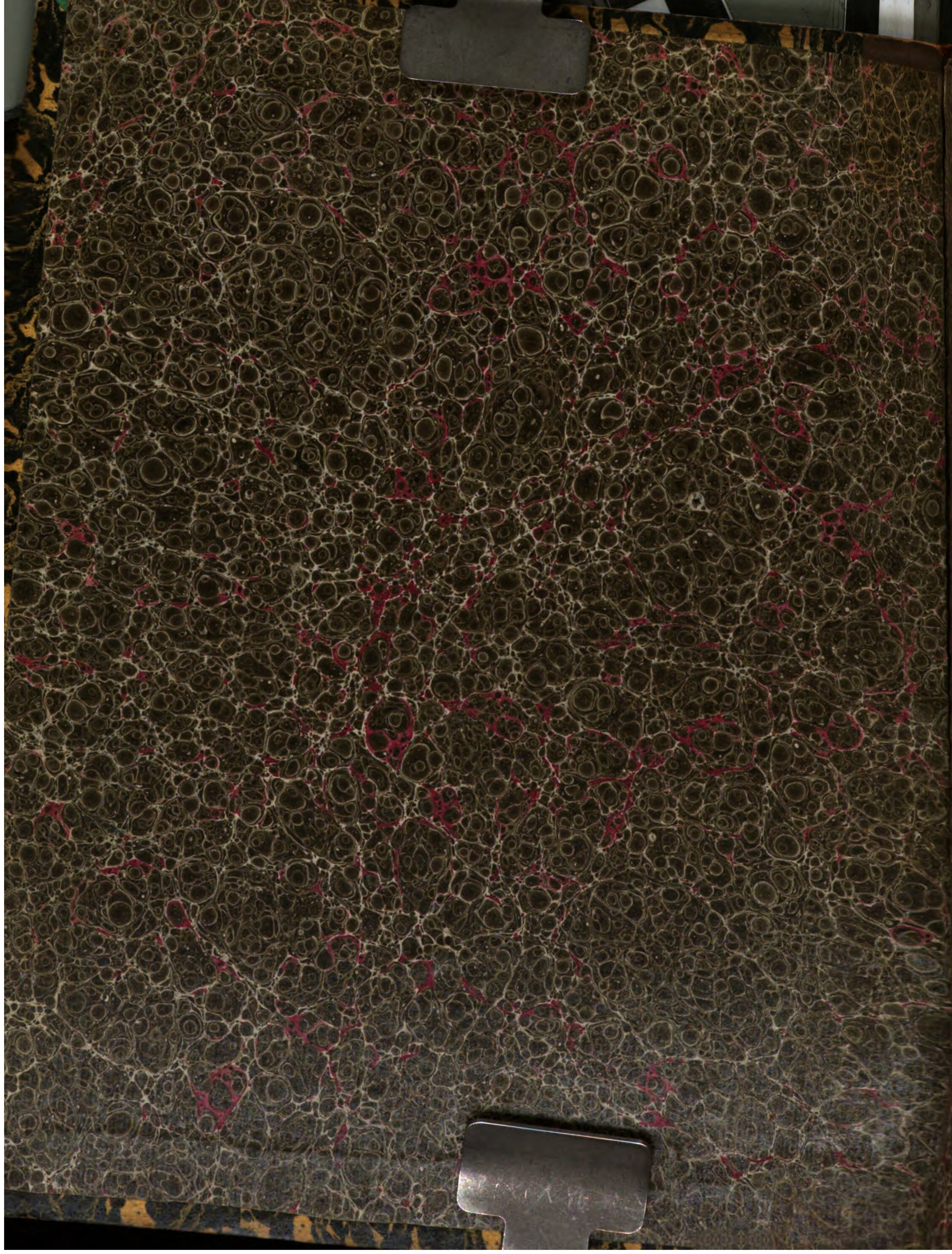
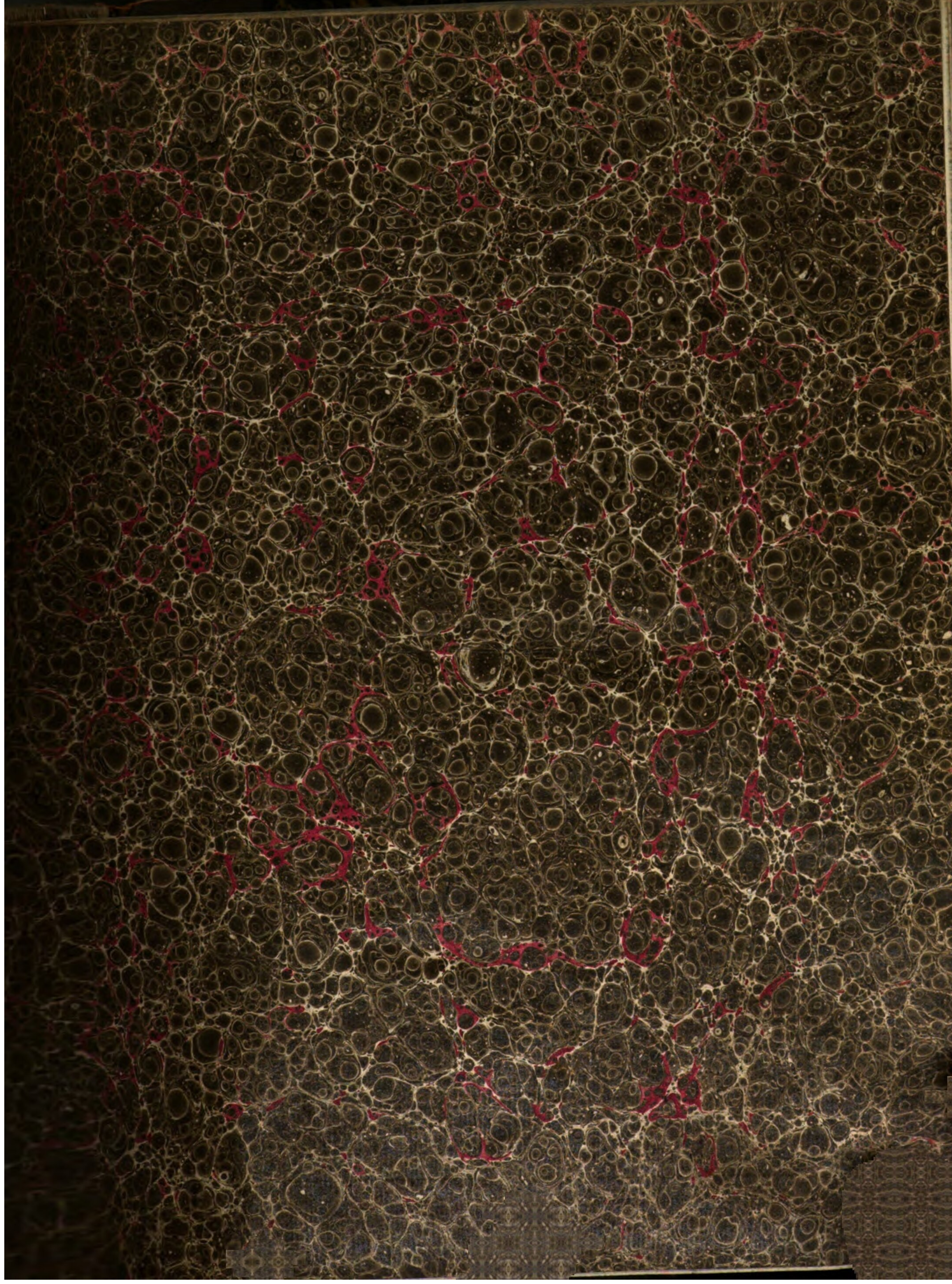








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THE
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THE

POEMS

OF

HERDSON

THE
P O E M S
O F
F E R D O S I.

TRANSLATED FROM THE PERSIAN BY
JOSEPH CHAMPION, ESQUIRE.

MIHI SIT, ORO, NON INUTILIS TOGA,
NEC INDISERTA LINGUA, NEC TURPIS MANUS.

SIR W. JONES.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. CADELL, STRAND; and J. DEBRET, PICCADILLY.

M. DCC. LXXXVIII.

THE
P O E M S
OF
F E R D I N A N D
I.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY
JOSEPH H. CHALMERS, ESQUIRE.
BIBLIOTHECA
REGIA
MONACENSIS.

MINI SIT, ORO, NON INUTILIS TOGA,
NEC INDIGENTA LINGUA, NEC TURTIS MANUS.
SIR W. JONES.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N:
Printed for T. CADELL, Strand; and J. DEBRET, Piccadilly.
M. DCC. LXXXVIII.

THESE
P O E M S,
INTENDED AS AN
INTRODUCTION TO THE
PRINCIPAL HEROIC POEM
OF

F E R D O S I,

ON THE
ACTIONS OF RUSTEM,

ARE ADDRESSED TO

SIR WILLIAM JONES, KNIGHT,

WITH EVERY MARK OF RESPECT,

DUE TO EMINENCE OF TALENT,

EXERTED IN THE

ADVANCEMENT OF ORIENTAL LITERATURE,

BY HIS FAITHFUL

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT

THE AUTHOR.

THE
P O E M
INTENDED AS AN
INTRODUCTION TO THE
PRINCIPAL HEROIC POEM
OF
THE R D O S I
ON THE
ACTIONS OF RUSTEM
AND ADDRESSED TO
SIR WILLIAM JONES, KNIGHT,
WITH EVERY MARK OF RESPECT,
DUE TO EMINENCE OF TALENT,
ENTERED IN THE
ADVANCEMENT OF ORIENTAL LITERATURE
BY HIS PATRONS
AND OBEDIENT SERVANT
THE AUTHOR.

DEDICATION

TO

SIR WILLIAM JONES, KNIGHT.

IN this attempt Ferdosi's wond'rous pow'rs,
Seen like the sun obscur'd by vernal show'rs,
Struggle through various mists, that justly claim
The critic's candour on the poet's fame.
Shou'd Titian's tints, or Rubens' manly grace,
Some future painter on his canvass place,
Those lights and shades, that energy divine,
That wake each passion in their bold design,

Faint

Faint in the copy sketch th' unequall'd art,
Which charms the eye, and seizes on the heart.
No lofty notes have tun'd my humble lyre;
No spicy odours raise the fragrant fire;
No swelling songsters warble o'er my flowers;
No verdant foliage shades the tuneful bow'rs;
Pleas'd if the imitative line shou'd give,
In British verse Ferdosi's song to live,
Dip in the torrent of his rapid streams,
Or draw a shadow from his radiant beams.
'Tis rich imagination, force sublime,
That leads the poet in the hand of time:
'Tis gay invention drest in nervous thought,
With melody of verse by nature taught,
That stamps the bard: and yet thy beamy rays
May give my thoughts a transitory blaze.
Thus when the zephyrs waft the morning breeze,
And Phœbus richly gilds the vernal trees,
The vivid light rejoices all the throng,
And wakes to harmony the tuneful song.

Thy

Thy glowing tints the bright'ning canvass shows,
Thy breathing line with living beauty glows.
Did Poesy, sweet maid! employ thy hours;
(Still courting thee with her alluring pow'rs)
Our happy nation, favor'd by the skies!
Had seen in thee another Maro rise.
The eagle bore our Persian bard along,
Enchanting Asia with his magic song.
His energy of thought, his boundless mind,
Drew ev'ry scene as splendid as refin'd.
Whether through history's delightful page,
He leads the muse, or wakes her into rage,
Whether attractive fable fills the strain,
Winds through the mazes in poetic vein,
Whether 'tis fancy or description warms,
Or genius varying in a thousand forms,
He reigns unequall'd on the muses' throne,
And bounds o'er nature into worlds unknown.
The lofty columns of immortal fame
Rise o'er his tomb, and dignify his name.

B

When

When godlike deeds demand exalted strains,
When heroes triumph on the well-fought plains,
When eminence requires the nervous rhyme,
Who like Ferdosi, reach'd the great sublime?
He tow'r'd on wings beyond our mortal flight,
And brought each muse from her celestial height.
Strengthen my feeble pinions from thy throne!
To bear thy wonders to the frigid zone.
To lead thee to a world that knows thy name,
Though still unconscious of thy soaring fame.
Though Mahmoud frown'd, high seated on a throne,
Thy fame will reach where Mahmoud is unknown.
Mark well, ye great, while wafted on the tide
Of a smooth summer's stream with bubbling pride,
The innate dignity, the conscious fires,
That genius kindles, and that worth inspires.
Mark well, ye proud, Ferdosi's closing hour!
A king, a victor in the height of pow'r,
Oppress'd the bard; who eminently rose,
Greatly triumphant o'er his scepter'd foes.

Unblemish'd

Unblemish'd manners fill'd his ev'ry hour,
Above the keenest blast of ruffian pow'r.
Injur'd, he wou'd not supplicate a crown,
But scorn'd the terrors of a monarch's frown.
Let despots, with their minions circled round,
Delighted hear the flatt'rer's soothing sound.
Ages unborn, and wisdom's sacred train,
Will damn the tyrant as they read the strain.
Many a Troy, and many Hectors fall,
And many a monarch rules the spacious ball.
What crowds of monarchs, from remotest time,
Have pass'd like meteors thro' each earthly clime!
For Homer only did the epic muse
Weave the bright wreath, impearl'd in orient dew?
For our Ferdosi did the fates design,
The Poet's crown, and fancy's richest mine?
Does Hector or Achilles rage in fight?
A Rustem equals with undaunted might!
Do envious gods the fierce contention raise?
Ahermen rises, and the dæmons blaze!

Does filial piety Enneas warm,
Through seas immense, and through the hostile storm?
Read in great Munochere's illustrious reign,
The same bright moral, and exalted strain.
Inspir'd by genius, who assum'd his name,
By science tutor'd, and impell'd by fame,
See how Ferdosi, on his eagle wings,
Leaves time and nature gazing as he sings,
As when through chaos burst the beaming day,
And gave to fight the wond'rous heav'nly way,
So the rich language of the Persic plain,
Amaz'd and dazzled in Ferdosi's strain.
Proud Mahmoud dar'd the bard, whose mighty pow'rs,
Taught kings to tremble in their lofty tow'rs.
Thus when the lofty oak the storm defies,
And the fierce tempest in the low'ring skies;
Struck by the light'ning, by the tempest blown,
Prostrate it lies. A tyrant's fallen throne!

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ESSAY

E S S A Y
ON THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
FERDOSI.

ABUL Cassem Munfuril Ferdosi was descended from Ahmed 'ul Ferdosi, one of the principal inhabitants of the town of Sar, in the province of Tus, in the kingdom of Khorasan. At the period of his birth,
his

his father saw the infant in a dream standing with his face to the west, and elevating his voice, the echo of which reverberated from every quarter. When Ahmed arose, he applied to Rudgebuddein, a famous interpreter, for the solution of his vision. The interpreter gave the following exposition : “ That the
“ fame of his son, and his poetical talents, would be
“ the theme of the universe.” The translation of the dream was natural. Poetry at that æra was the principal road to preferment, and the praise of tuneful versification was the general theme. This circumstance, which is related of Ferdosi, bears a strong resemblance to the reply of the oracle of Apollo to Mnifarchus, the father of Euripides, on the birth of his son. “ Happy Mnifarchus ! Heav’n design a son.
“ The listening world shall witness his renown, and
“ with glad shouts bestow the sacred crown.” So
fond

fond are all nations of giving some wonderful presage to illustrious characters. Ferdosi received the early rudiments of his education under the best masters of the place of his nativity. His memory, when a boy, was extensive; his application, ardent. The first dawning of that blaze which subsequently burst forth with such unrivalled lustre, was perceived by the poet Affadi, who animated his pupil, and encouraged his vehement inclination to penetrate the most remote period of history.

The court of Mahmoud, sultan of Ghezny, was the seat of the muses. Fame has pictured him as one of the most accomplished sovereigns that ever sat on the Persian throne. His own taste led him to an extensive patronage of men of literature. Poetry and history were his favourite pursuits. His library was

furnished with the most authentic annals of the Persian empire; and a complete history, collected in the reign of Yezdegerd, by the most judicious historians in Persia—A list of every narrative, and every production which bore any relation to this subject, was formed by order of Yezdegerd, and from them was composed the annals of the kingdom. When Saadvekas, the general of Omar, plundered the palace of the Persian monarch, he found this valuable manuscript, and presented it to Omar—The caliph ordered a translation. The translator selected such passages as he deemed excellent, and laid them at the feet of Omar, who reprobated part of the book, for treating of such worldly affairs as are forbidden by the prophet. The book was thrown among the plunder, where it fell to the lot of an Abyssinian, who carried it as a present to his prince—The history was translated into

the

the Abyssinian language, by order of the king—Thus were the ancient annals of Persia preserved from the mandate of Omar, which destroyed the public library, fearful of the amusing and romantic tales which characterized these Asiatic writings—Hence were lost the origin and tenets of the worship of the sun, and the adoration of fire.

The history thus preserved soon found its way into Hindoستان: Its fame reached the kingdom of Khorasan. Yakcoob Lais (of the ancient family of the kings of that country) sent an envoy to transcribe the manuscript, and bring it to Khorasan; when it arrived, the translation of it (for it was written chiefly in the Peiblouvi language) was intrusted to Abu Munfur—Abu Munfur, at a considerable expence, assembled four of the principal historians, (Munfur of Umro,

Shashpoor of Zeistan, Mahoo of Neshapour, and Sulman of Tus) who added to, and embellished this invaluable work : To each of these he assigned their different part. The origin of the empire, the mode of government, their military skill, their civil and religious institutions. The poet Dukeki was ordered to form this history into heroic poems, but, after writing two thousand verses, was stabbed by a slave. The researches of the sultan, and his magnificence continued to throw more light into the ancient history. Hoorferose, descended from Noursherwan, was compelled to fly his native country, (and on presenting the sultan Mahmoud with a history of Persia, was magnificently treated — The chief of Kernan, as the greatest gift he could send to the court of Ghezny, transmitted many particulars of the ancient royal families, written by Arzub-Zerrin, a writer celebrated for his

his attention to the events of past ages. Ferozabad, (lineally descended from Saum Nuriman, the father of the celebrated Rustem, had received from his parents many oral traditions of Saum, Rustem, and Zal, which had been invariably handed from father to son, in the same manner as the songs of the Tartars) was employed by the sultan to transcribe them. To seven of the poetical courtiers, with their principal Unfuri, Mahmoud gave seven parts to be formed into heroic poems. To Ferdosi we now return—

When Mahmoud had perused the work presented to him by Hoorferose, his desire of having the annals of Persia, and the achievements of the heroes in a series of heroic poems, was increased—It consequently became the general topic of conversation. The design of composing the imperial annals suggested it-
self

self to the mind of Ferdosi. To Mahommed Lefkery, who was at Tus, and with whom he was connected, he communicated his intentions, described the consciousness he felt of being equal to the arduous undertaking, and regretted the want of materials and books to proceed in the attempt—His friend, enamoured of the design, assured him of immortality, and declared how readily he would supply him with such manuscripts as might be essential to the completion of his poems. He revealed his intentions to Sheych Mahommed Mashook, the high priest of Tus, and required his benediction—His request was granted; and he assured the young poet, that fame and honour would attend him. Thus animated, he composed the wars of Feredoon and Zohak—Fame told the story to all the neighbouring provinces, and crowds of people thronged to the residence of our poet, to hear

hear him repeat his verses. Abu Munfur Afsagien, the chief of Tus, could not long be unacquainted with the eminence of Ferdosi. He requested his attendance, and charmed by the specimen of his genius, encouraged him to proceed, promising that he would introduce him to the royal presence, and declared that to the extent of his ability, he should be rewarded; but only the sovereigns of Asia could give those honours which were due to his talents. Ferdosi with undeviating industry persevered. When his patron died, (and the poet has elegantly sung his praises) Arsalan Haris was appointed the successor of Abu Munfur Afsagien, in the government of Tus, and received the orders of the sultan to direct the attendance of Ferdosi at Ghezny. The sultan, impatient to see the man, of whom he had heard such unbounded praise, repeated
his

his injunctions in a letter to the chief of Tus, ordering him to send Ferdosi on the receipt of it.

In a dream, the imagination of Ferdosi had pictured to him a young monarch, seated on a throne illuminating the universe; and particularly smiling on himself: To a friend he communicated the vision, who solved it by the supposition of its being the sultan Mahmoud. Arfalan Haris, in obedience to his orders, acquainted Ferdosi with the inclination of the prince—Our poet, intimidated, was fearful of going alone to Ghezny: He perceived the umbrage it would give to the poetical courtiers; but recollecting his dream, and regarding it as a favourable omen, he quitted Tus, not without anxiety.

Report,

Report, on his arrival, had given such a portrait of his genius and poetical ability, that Unfuri, Ferrokee, and Asjudy, formed a combination against him to prevent his introduction. Buddeuddun, an attendant on the court, blew the embers of this jealousy, and plainly told them, that the appearance of Ferdosi would eclipse their merit in the opinion of the prince, and that their services would meet with no future reward—Ferdosi had a friend in the service of the sultan, whose name was Mahik; to him he imparted his arrival, and the cause of it. With Mahik he every evening consulted on the mode that ought to be adopted to frustrate the machinations of Unfuri and his cabal. A few days after his arrival, the sultan, as was his custom, listened to the productions of the poets. Unfuri repeated the victory of Rustem over Sohrab, which the prince highly approved of.

On this Ferdosi composed the actions of Rustem and Isfendiar.

Pleased with his own work, he gave them to his friend, and anticipated the praise he should receive on the comparison with those of Unfuri. Mahik presented them to the sultan; the delighted prince called for the author, Mahik informed him that they were written by Ferdosi, who was anxious to be presented to the sultan—In obedience to the orders of Mahmoud, Ferdosi was introduced by his friend, and sung his praises in the following lines:

Such are the blessings of the sultan's reign,

The king of Turkey and the Indian plain,

That lambs with tygers, fearless of a fray,

Sport in the stream, or near the riv'let play.

From

From great Kanouge to Sind's imperial stream,
Through Iran, Turan, does the monarch beam;
From Cashimere to China's distant bounds,
Obey'd his mandates, and his fame resounds.
E'en kings, obedient, bow to his desires,
The name of Mahmoud mark'd his infant fires!
Just is his word; intrepid in the fight;
Fierce as the terror-striking dragon's might——
In strength an elephant, the warrior shines,
Yet mild as Gabriel's, flow his just designs.
In acts beneficent, as when the rain,
Of fertile Behmen cultivates the plain;
His mighty soul, all boundless as the Nile,
Pants for renown, through fame's illustrious toil.

The king ordered Unfuri to execute his plan, but
he, conscious of his inability, pretended that his con-
stant attendance on the sultan would not admit of the
leisure requisite for so extensive an undertaking; and

taking hold of the hands of Ferdosi, spoke of him as the only man of genius capable of accomplishing the wishes of his master—The sultan turning to Ferdosi, said, “ ’Tis you that have thrown a lustre on the “ court of Ghezny.” From this period our poet was treated with every mark of confidence by the sultan. The effusions of each day, Ferdosi read every evening to Mahmoud. It was a common expression of Mahmoud’s, that whenever he was unwell, or chagrined, the verses of Ferdosi alone could alleviate. He ordered a thousand dinars (each dinar is nearly eight shillings and sixpence) to be paid to Ferdosi for a thousand lines, but he postponed the acceptance, that he might receive in one payment the promised amount of his labours, a dinar for every line. It was his intention to beautify the place of his nativity, and fix his daughter there in an elevated station. All the
poets

poets of Ghezny emulated each other in their panegyric on the author of the Shâh Namêh: The vizier of Mahmoud, Khaja Huffin Meymundy, was secretly inimical to Ferdosi, who refused to court, and could never be prevailed on to write any eulogium upon him. The difference of sect increased the mutual animosity; (Meymundy being a Suuni, and Ferdosi of the followers of Ali) he would often in exultation say, “ why should I submit to pay any adulation to the vizier? I am conscious that I alone
“ can complete the poems, and I expect no reward
“ from Mahmoud above the specified adjustment for
“ my labours.”

The courtiers, envious of the poet's situation, soon whispered these sentiments to the vizier, who exerted every means in his power to irritate the sultan against him ;

him; but the attempt proved ineffectual. Ferdosi continued to enjoy the patronage of Mahmoud. The intrigues of the vizier continued. The poems as they were written by Ferdosi, were occasionally copied, and admired in every city of the empire. The heroes of Persia were pictured in the most brilliant colours——Inferior characters were delineated; the vizier was incensed that no part of the Shâh Namêh had introduced him in that light which it was his ambition to be placed in: Presents were offered from the princes of the neighbouring countries to Ferdosi: these he constantly declined; the compact with Mahmoud, for his poems, he esteemed an adequate reward.

Rustem (the son of Faker ud Dowla Dilemy) presented five hundred dinars of gold to the man who brought him a copy of the actions of Rustem and If-fendiar,

fendiar, and transmitted a thousand dinars of gold to our poet, inviting him in the strongest terms to pass some time at his capital. "All the nobles and distinguished personages of this country," said the prince, "shall attend you to the palace; more honours it is not in my ability to show." This invitation was soon publicly known at Ghezny. To Mahmoud, the vizier intimated the news, and insinuated that as Rustem and the chiefs who had courted the attention of Ferdosi were the enemies of his majesty, and of the same sect as the poet, these presents were an intended insult to him. The poetical courtiers found every other calumny ineffectual; they urged, that Ferdosi, being of the sect of Ali, had reprobated every other, and as his majesty was of the Charyary, it was highly indecent. The Moslems consider the Suunit Rufool, the law of the prophet, as nearly of equal authority

thority with the Koran, but it is rejected by the sect of Ali, and they quoted the following lines in support of their opinion:

When God the sea created, and the skies,
And taught the waves, and boisterous winds to rise—
He seventy vessels made, full swell'd the sails,
They plough'd the surgy main, with fav'ring gales.
One vessel, far more splendid than the rest,
Bright as the eye by brilliant scenes imprest,
In honour of the altar he ordains:
In it, the prophet plough'd the liquid plains.
With Ali, his associate divine,
And all their kindred, their illustrious line.
Say, do thy hopes in future life ascend,
To Ali, and Mahommed's doctrines bend?
Yet should to future ills thy tenets lead,
Mine be the blame, by Mahommed decreed.

This

This my religion—taught in early youth,
In this I die, all conscious of its truth;
My future life to this alone I give,
In its eulogium ever will I live.

The seventy vessels are the seventy sects of the Mahommedan religion. The intrigues of his rivals still had not the desired effect. The friends and enemies of Ferdosi now formed themselves into cabals, and whenever they met in any mixed society, the merit of our poet was generally the subject of their conversation, and often the cause of high altercation; even the presence of the sultan could not curb their animadversions. Mahmoud, in the height of a discussion, ordered Ferdosi to attend with his lines which he had composed that day, that his merit might be decided by his own production. The part was the story of Rustem and Uskaboos; the substance of which is as

VOL. I.

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follows:

follows : When Kamoos sent Ufkaboos to Iran, Rohan, the general of Tus, met him on the plain. A battle ensued—On the conclusion of the day, Rohan fled to the mountains. Tus, indignant at the intelligence, prepared to march against Ufkaboos in person, to whom Rustem said, “ why should the
“ chief himself in this instance dare the front of war?
“ that is my duty ; while you remain at the capital
“ with your martial followers, I will soon close the
“ period of his existence.” Rustem, alighting from his horse, assumed the disguise of a servant, and immediately departed to the encampment of Ufkaboos. On his arrival he drew his bow, at sight of the combatant ; the arrow did not strike him, but piercing his horse, the general of Kamoos fell, and darted an arrow at Rustem ; it had no effect ; Rustem seized a lance,

lance, and approaching his antagonist, struck him to the heart.

When Ferdosi had repeated the poem on this subject, it was followed by a general acclamation. The sultan, as a recompense, ordered him the amount of whatever was received by Rustem from the provinces of Kabul and Zabul. It was Rustem, say the fables of Persia, who, in a dream, appeared to our poet, and advised him on that day to prepare a poem on this subject; and that the shade of Rustem, pleased with the elegance and melody of the verses, which had pictured his own achievements in such sublime colours, again visited Ferdosi in the armour he wore, on the day of his combat with Uskaboos. He told Ferdosi, in a place at Bicknabad, that he had marked with an arrow, he had buried the ornaments taken in battle

from his enemies, which he now bestowed on Ferdosi. Our poet, fearful of the consequence, related his vision to no person, but Ayâze, the favourite slave of Mahmoud. Some days after this event, Mahmoud ordered a feat to be built at Bicknabad, and in cutting the foundation, the ornaments were found. Ayâze immediately related the vision to the sultan, who ordered them to be delivered to Ferdosi, who divided them among the poets of Ghezny, and retained none for his own portion. It is a common custom to bury jewels, &c. in Asia. These ornaments were probably found, and Ayâze, anxious to serve his friend, took this occasion of doing it.

Ferdosi, at the age of seventy, on the 25th day of Inspendarmus, the last month of the Persian year, (February) in the 374th year of the hêjra, concluded
the

the heroic poems, which consisted of one hundred thousand lines, and presenting them to the sultan, demanded his reward; Mahmoud ordered the stipulated amount to be paid, and charged the vizier to attend to his commands. “ Highly, said the sultan, “ does Ferdosi merit every recompense : So sublime a “ poet, fame has never given to the world ; and such “ polished versification I never read ; his industry too “ has been equally great.” The sultan then expressed himself in this manner :

The tuneful lines, that elevate to fame,
Are as the soul that animates the frame.
Who but Ferdosi cou'd such thoughts inspire,
To Heav'n they rise, and with celestial fire ;
Sublime, and eminent, he soars along,
And sweetest odours breathe around his song.

Fair

Fair melody still courts his flowing lays ;
And rival bards all lessen in his rays.
High as the elephant, on wisdom's plain,
He tow'rs aloft, and decorates the strain.
The pearls of eloquence Ferdosi brought —
I never knew such eminence of thought.
I will reward him with a monarch's hand,
And raise the leader of the tuneful band.

Hussin Meymundy, the vizier, in lieu of sending the sixty thousand gold dinars by one of the sultan's slaves, gave him, in sealed bags, as many silver ones. Ferdosi happened to be bathing at the period of his arrival. When he opened the bags, his high spirit felt all the indignity which he imagined the sultan intended to load him with. He gave immediately twenty thousand to the keeper of the bath ; twenty thousand to a fruiterer who attended, and twenty thousand

thousand to the slave who delivered him the money. The poet consoled himself with the laurels of immortality, and he has beautifully described his hope of paradise from the consciousness of a life well spent. “ I wrote for fame,” said Ferdosi to the slave, “ not
“ for the attainment of riches !” The slave repeated to the sultan the whole story—he was irritated at the insolence of the vizier, and reproved his conduct :
“ This action,” exclaimed the sultan, “ will not
“ only irritate the poet, but mankind will reprobate
“ a sordid parsimony injurious to my fame ; I ordered
“ the golden dinar to be sent, and you have basely
“ changed it into silver.” To which the minister replied, “ whatever is given by your majesty, imprints
“ an honour on the man to whom it is bestowed—
“ it was insolent in Ferdosi to treat any donation of
“ the sultan’s with contempt : the most trivial pre-
“ sent

“ sent from his hands is a trophy that should be re-
“ ceived with pride—his conduct exhibits a disposi-
“ tion devoid of that respect which is so eminently
“ due to your majesty.” These, and various insinua-
tions respecting the difference of sect, from which the
minister pretended to fathom the motive of Ferdosi’s
behaviour, provoked the monarch of Ghezny. “ The
“ foot of the elephant,” said the irritated prince,
“ shall teach the refractory a lesson of obedience.”
Ferdosi received immediate intelligence of the sultan’s
indignation ; and on the succeeding morning, watch-
ed his entrance into the garden, where, being alarmed
for the consequences he had so much reason to appre-
hend, he threw himself at the feet of Mahmoud, ex-
claiming in the most affecting manner, “ Pardon me,
“ illustrious sovereign ! For I am not culpable ; the
“ representations of my enemies are a violation of
every

“ every truth, and are fabricated to exasperate your
“ majesty against me. I am not guilty of disobe-
“ dience ; I received your gracious donation with the
“ greatest humility, and esteemed it as a distinguished
“ honour. I distributed the gift among those who
“ had claims upon me ; many are the disobedient in
“ this monarchy, but I am not of the number ; I am
“ but an humble individual ; the sentence of your
“ majesty I have heard ; yet what glory can arise to
“ the monarch in depriving a poor man of his exist-
“ ence ? Let me implore a reversion of the decree, and
“ let me be restored to life.”

The sultan, moved by this affecting address, revoked the sentence. Ferdosi returned to his apartment, where he destroyed some fine poems which he had intended to present to the sultan on the completion of

the Shâh Namêh; they probably were in praise of Mahmoud—he threw them, with indignation, into the flames.

Ferdosi, anxious to quit a scene where every object that presented itself recalled the mortifications he had endured, wrote a note, and delivered it to Ayâze, requesting him to present it, twenty days after his departure, to the fultan, whenever he should be in a festive mood. Ayâze received the note, and in compliance with the wishes of Ferdosi, whom he revered as a parent, gave it to the fultan: It was the celebrated satire of Ferdosi, which I have imitated from the Muuntuk ul Shâh Namêh.

Think not, O! King, thy sceptre, or thy power,
One moment can arrest the destin'd hour;

Know,

Know, 'tis thy charge, pre-eminently thine,
To act with justice, moral and divine.
The ant has life, that culls the bearded grain,
Thou shalt not dare to sorrow it with pain.
Didst thou not tremble, conscious that the muse,
Wou'd eminently scorn thy sordid views?
Didst thou not fear the man, whose heav'nly strain,
Bounding o'er time, made monarchs rule again.
Had worth or judgement glimmer'd in your breast,
In peace, the old man wou'd have sunk to rest.
Had royal blood flow'd in your grov'ling veins,
A monarch's laurels had adorn'd my strains.
Or, were your mother not ignobly base,
The slave of lust! thou, first of all thy race!
A poet's merit had inspir'd thy mind:
By science tutor'd, and by worth refin'd.
Such as thou art, the vileness of thy birth,
Precludes each generous sentiment of worth.
Nor kingly origin, nor noble race,
Warms thy low heart, the offspring of disgrace!

Thy life, poor wretch ! 'twas Isfahan that gave,
Thy fire a blacksmith, and thy dam a slave.
This lesson let each moralist indite,
Ne'er strive to make an Ethiopian white ;
Nor vainly think the bastard of a slave
Can emulate the feelings of the brave.
Can the base prostitute with virtue glow ?
Or worth can her polluted lineage know ?
For thee, will nature from her order stray,
And give to night the sun's meridian ray ?
In smoothest streams my numbers richly flow,
Now glide along, and now with rapture glow.
Lives there a poet in whose tuneful veins,
Flow loftier thoughts in more poetic strains ?
Though poor, though humble, still the voice of fame,
Shall eternise Ferdosi's laurell'd name.
Heroes have blaz'd, the meteor of an hour,
Oblivion menac'd to entomb their power.
Till snatch'd from silence, from devouring time,
They reign for ever in the verse sublime.

For

For thirty years I woo'd the tuneful nine,
And Persia lives in my immortal line.
But when, alas! I clos'd the grand design,
(The royal word was pledg'd, that word divine,
To monarchs sacred) vainly did I claim
That wealth and honour which exalts to fame.
So base a gift thou meanly dar'd to send,
(Stamp'd for thy falsehood, wither'd be thy end!)
Thy gift, I gave it to my menial slave,
(Him it might suit, from poverty might save)
Had clear reflection e'er illum'd thy mind,
The bard had never damn'd thee to mankind.
No low'ring clouds had hover'd o'er my day;
Serene and mild had pass'd my evening ray.
Had not thy birth, polluted as thy foul,
Strove, though in vain, my genius to control.
Mortals attend! no low-born tyrant trust!
The truly great are to the muses just!
The tree, whose native juices are defil'd,
No foilage shades, for ever rank and wild.

Though

Though richest essence spreads its sweets around,
Though nurs'd and water'd on elysian ground,
For ever wou'd its wither'd blossoms die,
And art, in vain, her utmost efforts try.
Expect not, honour'd bards! though sweet your strain,
Plaudits or trophies from the loose profane.
From tainted springs no lucid waters flow,
From the rank weed no roseate blossoms grow.
The slave of envy damns your tuneful lays,
Droops at your powers, and sickens at your praise!

The exalted sentiments of the poet were not to be daunted by the power of the sultan. Conscious of having deserved the highest honours that monarch could bestow, and irritated at finding the labour of a life thus rewarded, it is not wonderful his indignation burst into the keenest satire. The gate of fortune, for thirty years, was presented to the view of Ferdosi, which,
when

when the disgraceful intrigues of a court closed, the temple of fame opened her doors for the poet. His disappointment was increased by the fondness which he had for an only daughter; to place her in an elevated situation was a constant stimulus to his genius.

It has been said of Homer, that, liberal as he was of the praises of others, his modesty prevented him from any encomium on himself. Ferdosi, in this satire, extols his own powers; but when we consider the provocation, and that his only resource lay in conscious eminence, the celebration of his own labours, as they tend to lower the character against which his satire is levelled, is not only excusable, but essential to the subject.

Ferdosi,

Ferdosi, says the Mudjemoonovader, wrote by inspiration—read his works, and all the productions of other writers sink in the imagination. Ferdosi wings on a generous steed, while other poets scarcely rise above the surface of the earth. To the end of time, says the elegant Jami, will ignominy wait on the name of Mahmoud, and he breaks out in the following beautiful apostrophe:

Blest is the man whom love of fame inspires,
Who knows the poet, his immortal fires.
When hostile time the adverse arrow wings,
The poet stamps the future fate of Kings.
Mahmoud is dead——his splendour beams no more,
Lost in oblivion's solitary shore:
Disgrace alone attends upon his name,
Blind to Ferdosi's merit and his fame.

Ferdosi,

Ferdosi, on the day he delivered the note to Ayâze, fled, on foot, from Ghezny. His friends were told that he had no means of support, and were desirous of transmitting him money; but the apprehension of Mahmoud's anger prevented the execution of their wishes. The faithful Ayâze risked the consequences, and secretly provided Ferdosi with what was requisite for the continuation of his journey. The intelligence spread through Asia. The nobles and the learned reprobated the conduct of the sultan. As Ferdosi approached Kohistan, the chief of that division, Nazer Mullick Motassem, a dependent of Mahmoud's, and a favourite of that prince, sent for the poet, which alarmed him; but he was received with honour. The chief of Kohistan being informed that the poet intended to transmit to posterity a satirical narrative of the sultan's conduct, and was proceeding to Dilemy,

told Ferdosi how unbecoming it was to reprehend Mahmoud, and how unworthy of his superior genius to revile his prince; I am willing to serve you, and will, to the extent of my ability. He then ordered Ferdosi several thousand rupees, and requested him to bury his indignation in oblivion, and to destroy the satire.

From Mahmoud, the unjust, on Ghezny's plains,

Pale sorrow flow'd through all my bleeding veins.

Lost are my toils, my God will this attest,

And the whole labour of a life suppress'd.

Loud shall the piercing satire tell mankind

The fordid tale, and Mahmoud's lib'ral mind;

In the deep stream of woe he plung'd my age:

Fair truth shall animate the pointed page.

Through every region shall his race be known,

I fear no monarch, tremble at no throne!

To

To heav'n I solely bend with fearful awe,
Shall I then shudder at a tyrant's law?
From his first origin I trace his rise,
And mark the monarch with such fable dies,
Not all the art of man, not lucid streams,
Shall change the tinge, obliterate the themes.
Who knows not friendship from the artful foe,
Shall feel the arrow of the poet's bow.
To please Motasphem, shall the rest remain
Wrapt in oblivion——naught I will detain;
But send to thee whate'er the poet's rage
Had sketch'd indignant on the piercing page.
There shou'd a line be found not strictly true,
To flames consign them——to the public view
The sight of Mahmoud now can please no more,
I seek a refuge on a foreign shore.
I crave no pardon. The Almighty pow'r,
Will still protect me in the adverse hour.
And when the day of judgement shall appear,
Then let the mighty Lord of Ghezny fear.

Motafhem treated the poet with distinction, gave him an apartment in his palace, and wrote in the following manner to Mahmoud: “ Ferdosi is an old attendant on your majesty, who has faithfully served for thirty years; when you dismissed him, he received no reward adequate to his labours, and those labours were in obedience to your majesty’s orders. Surely this does not reflect honour on the imperial dignity.” This letter was received the day that his majesty went to the mosque, where Ferdosi had written the following lines on the wall, opposite to the royal seat:

Bright is the residence of Mahmoud’s pow’r,
Yet like the ocean in unbounded view.
’Twas there I founded, yet no pearl I found,
’Tis not the ocean, but the fates I blame.

Alarmed

Alarmed at the idea of being pourtrayed to posterity in disgraceful colours, Mahmoud began to feel severely for the passion he had imbibed by the insinuations of his minister. The friends of the poet catching the favourable moment as they perceived the turn of the sultan's mind, sounded the worth and high abilities of the fugitive; they worked on the fears of the prince by asserting, "that the treatment Ferdosi had received from the vizier, would, by posterity, be imputed to the sultan; that it would stand as a memorial to all people and to all nations. What is," said they, "the trivial consideration of sixty thousand dinars, or what value is a treasury where dishonour attends on the prince." The satire was public in Ghezny, and spread to every surrounding country. The vizier now severely felt the effect of his duplicity.

To

To Mazinderan, Ferdosi precipitated his journey, apprehensive of the sultan and the machinations of his minister. He here corrected the Shâh Namêh, and wrote a panegyric on Haffum ul Moulla Kaboos, the chief of the country, who was himself a poet, and had written an heroic poem in his own language.

When the chief of Mazinderan was informed of the arrival of Ferdosi, who had been employed by Mahmoud, he recollected that he was the poet who had absconded from the court of Ghezny, for the account had spread over Asia, and declared how difficult it would be for him to remain in that country, where the authority of the sultan extended; he however desired a perusal of the poems, and our immortal bard sent them to him. The chief of Mazinderan was enchanted with the work, but apprehensive of the sultan's indignation, and

and fearful of being displaced, he sent the poet a considerable present, with an injunction to seek an asylum in a different country, and to be cautious in revealing the place of his intended retreat. Ferdosi hastened his departure for Bagdad, where, on his arrival, the reflection of his misfortunes, and the necessity he was under of flying from his native country, in an advanced stage of life, embitter'd all his moments. For some time he was melancholy. Here he had no friend to administer consolation to his declining spirits. He passed his hours alone, and in apprehension of the sultan's indignation, when fortunately he met a merchant at Bagdad, who recollected him, and Ferdosi was joyfully recognized by him; he opened his doors to the poet, whose health was impaired by fatigue. In a short time he recovered his usual strength and spirits. The merchant assured Ferdosi, that on the publication
of

of his poems, he would receive every mark of distinction. “Be not uneasy,” said the generous merchant, “I will inform the vizier of your worth, your abilities, and your misfortunes. Attach’d himself to the muses, he will interest the caliph in your favour.” Ferdosi, whose knowledge of the Arabic was extensive, wrote a panegyric on the vizier in that language, and had the honour of presenting it. The noblemen of Bagdad, charmed with the specimen of ability, and the energy of indignation in so old a man, declared their sentiments warmly in his favour. An apartment in the palace of the vizier was allotted to him, and he was assured, that on the first occasion, he would be introduced to the caliph: “Your reputation,” said the vizier, “can no more, than the rays of the sun, be concealed.”

When

When Ferdosi was introduced to the caliph, he laid a thousand verses at his feet. The caliph ordered sixty thousand dinars (being the sum promised him by Mahmoud) to be paid the poet. "Ferdosi," he exclaimed to the vizier, "is the poetical wonder of Asia; his talents exceed whatever was known in this world."

Sultan Mahmoud, after a long period, in which the wars and high avocations of that prince had employed him, recollected Ferdosi, and directed an enquiry to be made. The attendants of the court informed him, that the poet was at Bagdad, honoured by the patronage of the caliph, and affluent in his fortunes. The sultan ordered Ferdosi to be apprehended, and wrote to the prince of Bagdad to send him immediately to Ghezny, threatening that in the

event of his disobedience to the mandate, the foot of the elephant should tread down his royalty. Khadim Abasi, unable to oppose the sultan in the field, and resolved at the same time not to deliver up the poet, who had sought his protection, an action which would, at that period in Persia, have covered him with ignominy, assembled his peers, and after many consultations, he replied to the sultan, “ that Ferdosi had
“ presented himself at Bagdad, where he had re-
“ ceived him with those marks of honour and respect
“ to which a man of such eminence was entitled. I
“ was so charmed,” says he, “ with the harmony of
“ his numbers, and his universal knowledge, that it
“ is not in the scale of my ability to describe the
“ elegance of his poetry. However anxious I was
“ that the court of Bagdad should be honoured with
“ the presence of so illustrious a guest, yet he de-
“ parted

“ parted from me and is gone to Yemen.” (Arabia Felix) No sooner had Khadim Abasi, by the united council of his nobility, resolved on this expedient, than he sent to Ferdosi, and conjuring him to drop all idea of his indignation to Mahmoud, advised him to go to Yemen, whose princes were worthy of his friendship, and attentive to eminence of merit. Ferdosi, well informed of the motives which caused the advice of Khadim Abasi, acceded to the proposal; the prince gave him five hundred dinars for the expence of his journey.

Ferdosi, at parting from the generous Khadim, thus addressed him——although his sorrow almost denied an utterance to his speech:

I go from Bagdad——yet its prince will share,
Each thought, each honour, and each future care..
By heaven's high favour, by our God sublime,
Thou art the Lord of this imperial clime.
Live with each glory that a mortal knows,
Just in each thought, victorious o'er thy foes.

The generous prince sensibly felt the loss, and replied in these words :

I cannot picture in exalted strain,
Thy general knowledge, thy poetic vein ;
Yet to my soul thy name shall mem'ry give,
While life remains, there shall Ferdosi live.
To draw my knowledge from thy lucid spring,
To rise to fame on thy superior wing,
Fair hope had pictur'd——but relentless fate,
Leads thee away from Bagdad's pensive state.

Khadim

Khadim Abafi, with infinite reluctance, beheld the venerable man quit his presence.

To Tus, and not to Arabia, did Ferdosi proceed, when the anger of Mahmoud was either softened into pity, or he was anxious to avert the future indignation of Ferdosi. The sultan ordered the sixty thousand dinars to be carried to Tus. One day, while the ancient, venerable poet was walking in the market place of the city, as a boy was repeating a verse to him, he fainted, and was carried to his house, where he expired without uttering a single word. As the people were carrying him to his grave, the present from the sultan arrived at Tus; it was presented to the daughter of Ferdosi, who, contrary to the counsel of her aunt, declined the acceptance of it, and gave the following memorable answer: “ That as her father, in his life-
“ time

“ time, had not received the present, it would ill become her to take what her father had declined.” The daughter of our poet built a famous stone stair-case on the banks of the river, which was to be seen a few years since at Tus. This was in honour of her father, who had, in the early period of life, formed the idea for the convenience of his fellow citizens.

Nafir Khisroe, a celebrated physician, records that in the 438th year of the hêjra, when he was at Tus, he observed a magnificent public edifice, and on enquiry, was informed, that it had been built by order of the sultan Mahmoud, in honour of Ferdosi's memory, with the sixty thousand dinars his daughter had refused. Near this building was the garden where the Homer of Persia was entombed.

The

The enthusiastic admirers of Ferdosi dwell with rapture on the following story, which gained astonishing belief: Abul Cassim, the priest of Tus, refused to read the usual prayers over the grave of Ferdosi, assigning, as a reason, that poets were the inventors of fables, and sacrificed truth to the embellishments of verse. In a dream Abul Cassim thought that he saw in paradise a sumptuous chair decorated with precious stones, and on enquiring for whom the magnificent seat was prepared, was informed, that Ferdosi had written a couplet, so pleasing to Omnipotence, that this eminence was awarded to him. When Abul Cassim awoke, with the vision imprinted on his mind, he repaired to the tomb of the poet—and performed that duty to his remains which he had before declined.

The

The elegant poet of Beleck, Tahir Wahid, has given us, in the following lines, the general idea of the Persians relating to the genius of Ferdosi:

If e'er the glow that animates the strain,
Of the great bard, a mortal cou'd attain,
I were an infidel — all beauteous came,
From th' empyrean heav'n, first born of fame!
Bright eloquence, descending from the skies,
Ferdosi, in his arms, receiv'd the prize,
And seated her triumphant on the throne,
Sacred by time, and genius all his own.

Invention, that parent of poetical genius, never exhibited such unbounded powers as are discovered in the imperial annals of Ferdosi; the whole circumference of oriental knowledge is displayed; the fictions of the east are embellished; the manners of past ages justly delineated;

delineated; and the force of human passion highly pictured. The Persians attributed seven qualities to the poems of Ferdosi; the basis of knowledge, the spring of excellence, a model of history, the true portrait of religion, that the sources of joy and sorrow are pointed out, that every species of intelligence is admirably marked. I have in vain searched for a commentary of his works; the ostentation of men of eminence in the east does not lead them to exhibit their learning in various lections, or in the amplifications of meanings formed on their own conjectures. The beauties or errors of the poet must rise or fall by their own merit. The commentaries on the Mahomedan law are an exception to the preceding observation—There are above sixty volumes explanatory; though indeed they are rather verbal criticisms, which the negligence of copiers afford so ample a field for.

The habits of education, and the veneration imbibed in the early period of life for the writings of the Greeks and Romans, have led us to put less value on the oriental manuscripts than they deserve. If ever the men of genius in Europe turn their thoughts to the poetry of the east, it will appear like the radiance of the sun breaking through a cloud; and I hope the specimens, though few, which some men of genius have lately given us, will lead to the cultivation of so important a branch of polite literature. The poetry of Jami is as harmonious as the most polished and musical versification of the Latins.

To softest music beauteous Jami sung,
And the bee's sweetness on his numbers hung.

ANON.

The

The similes of Ferdosi are *plenissima nectaris*—his invention lively and vigorous. When we consider the astonishing length of the production, and the constant flame that animates the whole, preserving an equal blaze, leaves the mind of a common reader in astonishment, and leads the poetical genius through unknown regions of the imagination. If Ferdosi is too luxuriant, he is carried on by the rapidity of his powers, and displays such extensive fertility, that the critic, incapable of reaching the sublimity of his conceptions, may judge of him by the coldness of his own feelings. The labours of Rustem are the standard of Ferdosi's genius. The influence of supernatural beings over his birth, prepare the mind for grand and extraordinary actions. We read of the birth of Minerva and of Bacchus, born in an extra-natural manner. If we admit of the Grecian fable, surely we

may subscribe to the Persian, and not turn rigid Roman Catholics in poetry, damning all sects but one!

The reflections of Ferdosi are animated and moral; the versifications smooth and polished; a quality, though possessed in general by the Persian poets, is heightened by the *poesis divina vis*, and gives that beauty to the range of enchantment which at once seizes on the avenues of the heart: nor can the judgement, in its coolest moment, censure the exuberance. The annals of the Persian kings and heroes would have been cold and insipid, and only would have been perused as they might have related to historical facts. — Ferdosi, piercing through the bounds of nature, created new worlds, and making them subservient to his plan, regulated his own sphere with such superior ability

ability and fanciful system, that the conduct of his poems appears in the natural order of that imaginary creation dignified by himself: they may not bear the touchstone of truth; but the fables of the east admitted them. There are no fatiguing digressions. Every succeeding poet has copied Homer. Ferdosi followed or imitated none, his genius was above all translation, the invention was his own. The story, a recital of actions that happened, in a certain degree embellished by fable: Asiatic splendour favoured the magnificent descriptions.

The Shâh Namêh was no sooner known than every man of consequence and letters was ambitious of having a copy, and considered his library as incomplete without it. The princes of the eastern world had it decorated with pictures, representative of the principal actions

actions in the poems. The fondness for quotations, which peculiarly marks the Asiatics, made the Shâh Namêh universally read. Many of the succeeding princes, though lost in indolence and luxurious sloth, still continued to imitate their predecessors in the elegance of their libraries; and this ostentatious display has preserved some of the poems of Ferdosi correct, and beautifully decorated.

No action is performed, no council held, without the approbation and advice of the wise men who were esteemed as under inspiration. The gay foliage caught the eye of the people, and they deemed events as determined on their opinions. They were in the sunshine of royal favour, which could not fail of giving new vigour to government. In a soil where it was a political principle to patronize men of genius, it is no wonder

wonder that science rose to early eminence. When monarchs are the companions of ability, it is not strange that they exert their powers in exhibiting to futurity splendid pictures of their martial achievements. Hence those encomiums bestowed on the Persian princes; hence those romantic qualities, which the luxuriance of oriental imagination ascribes to their patrons and their predecessors.

Divest the picture of its ornaments, and the natural image remains. A poet may embellish his subject, may illustrate it with all the beauties of imagery, yet he would never subject himself to the contempt of his co-temporaries, as well as posterity, by narratives of actions, the fallacy of which are publicly attested; nor would the Persian nation, ever attentive to their records, which omitted not the most trifling circumstances

stances wherein their princes were concerned, have esteemed the annals of Ferdosi as authentic, had they militated against the public records.

The poetry of this wonderful composition must be particularly pleasing to an European ear; the heathen Gods and Goddeffes have sported for so many ages in the regions of heroism, that new fiction, new imagery, new manners, and new warriors must yield the highest intellectual amusement. The fancy of Ferdosi was luxuriant; his delineation of successive characters in such variegated colours, is so happily diversified, that the whole range of human imagination seems exhausted. A celebrated poet has thus characterised the writings of Ferdosi :

Not would the Persian nation, ever attentive to their words, which omitted not the most trifling circum-

stances

No bard e'er found in nature's richest mines,
Th' inspiring ardour of Ferdosi's lines.
If other poets in mellifluent strains,
Have sung of heroes, or of verdant plains,
Not with such equal beauty have they strung
Our orient pearl, or with his genius sung.
Fir'd by his thoughts, the mighty monarch glows,
And the bee's sweetness o'er his numbers flows ;
Through ev'ry line he soars on equal wing,
And the whole world his wond'rous merits sing.
The brilliant in his strain preserves its ray,
For ever beaming with meridian day.
The diamond, ruby, or the costly ore,
No longer dazzle, and enchant no more.
Lost in the brighter lustre of his lines,
There the gem sparkles, there the diamond shines.
There all essentials breathe in ev'ry rhyme,
And kings and warriors fill the verse sublime.
Propriety is thron'd : — the lofty style,
Flows, like the surges of the boundless Nile.

In the selection of characters, Ferdosi has been peculiarly judicious; there are no mean personages, no low imagery, to take off the mind from the dignity of his heroes, or to yield any satisfaction varying from that which must ever arise from sublimity of thought, and a just concatenation of events: the *speciosa miracula* are ever introduced in conformity with the opinions of that nation for whom he wrote. That there are many errors in the Shâh Namêh cannot be denied; but in a production, which, from its astonishing length, precluded accurate revision, it is wonderful that they are so few. We see our poet persecuted from the period of its conclusion, to the close of his existence; and though the conscious eminence of his mind was not to be intimidated by power, and that power at command of a despotic prince, yet the perfect serenity of mind which is essential in the correction of such a work

work could not be expected in a man stung with disappointment. The fine copy of Arabic verses which he composed at Mazinderan, at the advanced age he was then at, evince the fertility of his genius, as well as the circumference of his knowledge, unimpaired by time or misfortune.

By order of sultan Æly Adihim Eefvy, of the family of the Acoubites, the Shâh Namêh was translated into Arabic by Kyamedeen Fitthè Abou Ali Il Hendi.

It will be here necessary to subjoin a few remarks on the commencement of the Shâh Namêh.

B O O K I.

V E R S E IV.

“ ’T WAS Kiûmers.” Taher Mahommed, in his general history of Asia, as well as all the Persian historians, agree, that Kiûmers was the first chief who began the Persian empire; some represent him as six, and some three descents from **Noah**. The Magi assert, that he was the first inhabitant of the globe. The four Dynasties or great families who sat on the Persian throne, were the Peish Dadians, the Kianians, the Afhkanians, and the Sassanians. The Peish Dadians reigned from Kiûmers to the death of Gershasp. The Kianians from Keykobad, of the family of Munochere, to the death of Iskender Roumi. (Alexander the Great) The Afhkanians from Afke. The Arfacides of the Greeks to Arduan, the son of Terfy. The Sassanians

Sassanians to the death of Yezdegerd, who lost his life and kingdom in a battle against the caliph Omar. The fables of the east are lost in a variety of conjectures respecting the birth of Kiûmers. The Magi, in proof of their position, maintain that the appellation of Gilshah was given him in consequence of his having been the first king. They eagerly inculcated this belief to give the greater solemnity to their tenets, by making the worship of fire coëval with mankind, and asserting that Kiûmers was the origin of their religion. The Tawareeck Tebri makes him the son of Keyan in six descents from Noah. Keyan left several children, with whom Kiûmers being at variance, he quitted the hills Dumavend, (the place of his nativity) near Rey, the capital of Persian Irak, where, from the protection he gave the people against the dæmons, they voluntarily made him their leader.

V E R S E

V E R S E XXXV.

“Rehmen alone.” Rehmen or Aherman, (the principle of evil) the chief of the dæmons, who were with the peres, or fairies, inhabitants of the earth, long previous to the creation, and governed by Jan bin Jan, the imaginary monarch of these fabulous beings. Their refractory spirit provoked the indignation of Omnipotence, and Ebles, the angel, was ordered to punish them. Elevated with his success, he refused obedience to the mandates of heaven, and was in consequence plunged into hell. Aherman and the dæmons were driven to the mountains, and the peres, or fairies, were banished to Jennistan. By their repentance, and the protection they afforded to mankind, they were received into the favour of heaven. Aherman, from his mountains, ordered his subjects to
many

many parts of the world, where they spread desolation, and were at variance with the fairies, who watched over the actions of the dæmons. The residence of these beings on the earth, before the creation of man, is fabled at nine thousand years.

The superiority in war of Kiûmers is thus accounted for: Previous to his settlement of the new people, he made a journey to Serendeb, (the island of Ceylon) and there discovered some of the armour of Jan bin Jan, the anteadamite king, who had presented them to our first parent.

V E R S E L.

“Kiûmers shall reign.” The ambiguous oracle of the aërial spirits is well calculated to inspire the king and his army with confidence. The assurance of safety
against

against the supernatural arts of the dæmons, by supposing a superior counteracting power, frees the mind from apprehension, and puts the two armies in the day of battle more on an equality—As much of futurity as is conducive to the animation of the new people is announced. The discovery of the fall of Seamuck would have destroyed the effect.

V E R S E LXX.

“ Rouse each warlike.” The power of the dæmons, the loss of his son, and the superior knowledge of his enemies, would naturally make an impression on the mind of Kiûmers. The poet properly introduces a heavenly agent, informing him of the divine decree, and elevating his thoughts by making him the agent of the divine orders. The religion of the Persians admitted not of the machinery of deities
presiding

presiding over different qualities and natures ; but they believed in predestination ; and Kiûmers must have been confident of success, acting in obedience to the decree of heaven.

VOL. I.

L

BOOK

B O O K II.

V E R S E LV.

“BEND every knee.” In this account of the origin of the worship of fire, as Ferdosi varies from many of the Persian historians, I shall give the reader another relation from the Kholasitul Achbar, taken from the Mazer ul Muluk; and as the worship of idols precedes that of fire, it may not be unenterprising to trace it to its source.

The prophet Idrees, or Enoch, was united by all the ties of friendship to a man whose name is not recorded. On the death of Enoch, his friend was inconsolable; Ebles, in a human form, presented himself to him, and under the semblance of participating his grief, advised him to make a statue in the likeness of

of the prophet. The instigation of Ebles had the desired effect; a statue was formed, and the friend of Enoch died soon after. The people finding the similitude, and urged by the exalted opinion they entertained of Enoch, worshiped the statue, and the vanity of princes led them to assume divine honours. Nimrod, at Babel, ordered his image to be adored. Azur, the father of Abraham, was a celebrated statuary, and employed on this occasion by Nimrod. An astrologer, whose reputation for sculpture was great, prognosticated, that in this year a man would be born who would expel idolatry from Babel; Nimrod immediately ordered all the infants unborn to be slain as soon as they saw the light. One hundred thousand, says Casséey, perished by this execrable decree. All the men in Babel were compelled to quit the city. Azur alone, in whom the king had implicit confidence,

remained. The wife of Azur proved with child; but the circumstance was carefully concealed, even from Azur. In nine months she brought forth Abraham, who was placed in a cave, where he remained fifteen years, and then visited his father's house. On a day, when, on account of some public religious ceremony, Azur and his family were attending the festival, Abraham cut all the idols in various places. On the return of his father, he informed him, that the idols had been battling together: "That cannot be," replied Azur. "Why," said Abraham, "if they are incapable of action, and of thought, do you pay divine honours to a piece of wood alone?" Nimrod received immediate intelligence of this event, and directed Abraham to attend; Abraham waited on the king, who observing him neglectful of the usual homage, demanded the cause of his insolence; "You are no
" God,"

“ God,” said the undaunted Abraham ; “ to him
“ who has the power of life and death, I alone bow
“ with reverential awe.” Nimrod directed two male-
factors to attend, and judged life to one, and instant
death to the other ; “ behold,” said Nimrod, “ the
“ description you have given of a deity.” “ This is
“ not,” replied he, “ the action of a God ; the God
“ that I adore, directs the motions of the sun from the
“ eastern to the western world ; reverse this order of
“ nature, and you have a just claim to adoration.”
Nimrod made no reply, and Abraham departed. He
began his public exhortations ; when the astrologer,
who had predicted the event, informed the king, that
Abraham was the man whom he foretold would expel
idolatry. Abraham, by order of Nimrod, was thrown
into a furnace, from which he uttered the *shind* and
paxind ; he remained unhurt amidst the flames, and

to

to the astonishment of the wondering spectators, the fire was extinguished, and the red rose alone visible. An angel attended Abraham in a human form. No one dared to repeat the story to Nimrod, who, a few days subsequent to this event, perceived Abraham with the attendant angel in a garden. “Whence is this!” exclaimed the irritated Nimrod. “These,” said Abraham, “are the actions of the God whom I adore; after this, can you arrogate the honours of a Deity?” “If you will,” replied Nimrod, “worship my idols, I will sacrifice to thy God; my own deification I cannot surrender.” “Sacrifice is of no avail,” said Abraham, “if you continue your own idolatry.” Nimrod vowed revenge on Abraham and his kindred, and assembled his forces; the prophet met them fearless and alone; a croud of insects infested the men of Nimrod; and the insects
piercing

piercing to his own brain, soon closed the period of his existence.

The country which formerly was named Pars, received that appellation from Pars, the son of Peihlou, who was the chief of Iran; and all the cities and countries of that kingdom were anciently named Pars. From the river Iihon to Forat (the Euphrates) it extended; in breadth, from Babul Abwab, on the Caspian Sea, to the Ocean. The several kingdoms which constituted the original empire were subsequently divided. Khorasan was included in the division of Mushrek Istachur, and from thence it was named Khorasan. Ispahan, at the period of Mahomedism, was partitioned into Erak Arib, and at present is in Erak Ajem.

Sheick

Sheick Bin Hajur Afsalani, a man celebrated for the greatness of his erudition, records, that the western part of the empire took its name from the twelve sons of Edram, (the grandson of Noah) who were famed for their skill in horsemanship, and were called Faris, which word, in Arabic, implies a cavalier. Faris from this became the name of this western empire. They were of the religion of the Magi, and represented as men equally famous in the field and council.

The Persian language was divided into seven dialects, four of which, the Suky, Harohy, Sazi, and Sewali, are obsolete, and were never considered as deserving of attention. The Parfi, the Dery, and the Peihlouvi, were the remaining three. The Parfi is celebrated for
its

its softness, and principally spoken in the division of Istakhar, built by Kiûmers.

The Deri is formed on the ancient Parfi, famous for its courtly and elegant style. Beleck Muroe, Shazan, and Bochara, are the principal cities in which it is spoken. Some authors add the city of Bahdackshan, and those writers who are the natives of these countries, fond of tracing, to a distant period, the origin of their language, assert that the Kianian princes always used this dialect. The prophet Mahommed, attached as he was to the Arabic, frequently declared, that the Supreme Being, in every decree of particular benevolence, declared himself in the Deri.

The Peihlouvi is named from Peihlou, the father of Pars, spoken chiefly at Rey, (Bactriana) Ispahan, and Dinou. Peihlou emphatically signifies a city.

CHRONOLOGY

OF THE

FOUR DYNASTIES,

ACCORDING TO THE PERSIAN ACCOUNT.

THE PEISH DADIANS REIGNED 2441 YEARS.

	Years.
Kiûmers - - - - -	30
Hofhung - - - - -	40
Tahmuraz - - - - -	30
Gemsheid - - - - -	700
Zohak - - - - -	1000
Feredoon - - - - -	500
Munochere - - - - -	120
Nooder - - - - -	7
Zou Tehmasp - - - - -	5
Gerfhasp - - - - -	9

Years 2441

The

OF THE
THE KIANIANS REIGNED 684 YEARS, 4 MONTHS.

FOUR DYNASTIES

Years Months

Kaikubad

100

Kai Kaous

150

Kai Khosro

60

Zohrasp

120

Gerfasp

120

Behmen

60

Homar

32

Darab, the elder

14

4

Darab, the younger

14

Iskender, (Alexander the Great)

14

Years 684 4

The

[illegible]

Years 217

THE SASSANIANS REIGNED 484 YEARS, 6 MONTHS.

								Months	Years
Arudsheir Babegan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	1
Shapour	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	
Avour Mezd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	9
Behram	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	3
Behram, the younger	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	
Behremian	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	4
Terfy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	
Bourmurd Terfy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	9
Shapour Zul Akwaf	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	
Arudsheir Necko Car	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	4
Shapour, the younger	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	
Behram	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	
Yezdegerd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	
Behram Gour	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	
Yestigerd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	
Hourmurd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	
Hourmeize	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	
Parvis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	
Kobad	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	
Noursherwan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48	
Khofro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	
Sherouya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	7
Arudsheir	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
Poorandockt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	6
Ferocktzerd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Arufmdoet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	4
Yefdyud Sheiryar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	
								Years	484 6

TO

TO THE

SUBSCRIBERS.

WHOEVER adverts to the difficulty of rendering the spirit of an author, whose language and the manners of whose heroes are so dissimilar, not only to our own, but to those of the ancients, whom we are taught, from our early infancy, to reverence, will excuse the inaccuracies of this attempt to give the Persian poet

poet an English dress. Idioms so various as those of Europe and Asia, must require considerable discernment to preserve them in any tolerable degree. Errors may easily be distinguished. If the intention is preserved, and the similitude retained, the colouring must be that of the translator. Particular passages may be open to the eye of criticism; but to retain the beauty of the original, and make the beauty accord with the intelligence of our native language, will appear chiefly difficult to those who have made the experiment. That part of the Shâh Namêh which is now offered to the public, is the least interesting of the whole production. The genius of Ferdosi expands as the brilliancy of the exploits of his heroes demands a superior animation of style, and an exertion of the highest powers of imagination to describe actions which require almost unbounded abilities.

The

The Subscribers have a claim upon me to be informed, in what manner I propose to continue my translation of the Shâh Namêh; should health permit me to re-assume it, the length precludes a faithful interpretation of every line. The heroic poem, which includes the atcheivements of Rustem, Sohrab, and Isfendiar, will be the continuation of my next publication. I propose selecting the most animating allusions, the most splendid actions, and most beautiful passages from Ferdosi, without losing sight of the concatenation of events. The number of lines will be equal to the Iliad of Homer. This forms what may be called the second division of Ferdosi's heroic poems. With respect to the remaining part, it is impossible to hazard, at this period, any decisive opinion.

VOL. I.

N

THE

THE ARGUMENT.

THE elevation of Kiûmers, and the attack of the dæmons——
Kiûmers, the first monarch who reigned in Persia, and his son Seâmuck, are attacked by the dæmons, jealous of their increasing power——
Seâmuck is killed in a single combat with a young dæmon, which closes the first action——The intelligence carried to Kiûmers causes the highest lamentations: he determines on revenge, and assembling his army, places Hoshung, the son of Seâmuck, at the head of his troops——His advice to him——The dæmons meet them in the field, where the old king gains a compleat victory——The dæmon, by whose prowess Seâmuck had fallen, is killed by Hoshung——Kiûmers dies——
The author's reflections on the instability of life.

T H E

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

B O O K I.

GREAT deeds I sing ! my guide recording time !

Imperial annals fill the song sublime —

What chief invented first the royal throne,

The rich tiara, and the splendid zone ?

'Twas Kiûmers ! at whose auspicious birth

A smile expanded o'er the genial earth !

'Twas when yon sun was moving on his way,
From Aries to the Lamb, with brilliant ray.
On him fair worth and spotless honours beam,
Pure and unfullied as the limpid stream.
Though born 'midst hills, he felt an innate flame,
An humble chief as then unknown to fame!
But when enthron'd, exalted high in pow'r,
A greatful world confess'd the fav'ring hour?
For thirty years the royal vest he wore,
He cloth'd the naked and he fed the poor!
As yon bright orb its borrow'd beams displays,
So beam'd the chief with heav'n-reflected rays.
His form erect a manly lustre spread,
As the tall cypress rears its lofty head.
E'en at his sight the brute became serene,
And bow'd before his throne with placid mien.
So thinking mortals, in some dome divine,
Obedient bend before the awful shrine —
One son he had, pre-eminent in worth,
Like his fond fire, a fav'rite of the earth!

Seâmuck

Seâmuck was his name! alone the boy,
Each thought employ'd and center'd ev'ry joy,
As the young vines new life and vigour bring,
In him would renovate the parent king.
A moment's absence wak'd the tender sigh,
And the fond tear stood trembling in his eye.
Fair peace attended, and a fav'ring gale
Through life auspicious, fill'd the swelling sail.
Rehmen alone, a dæmon damn'd to fame,
Breath'd hostile fury, and infernal flame.
Dire Rehmen's soul teem'd with malignant rage,
To crush the monarch and the rising age.
His daring son shook all a trembling world,
Fierce as the wolf, he wide destruction hurl'd.
Without reserve he every plan confest,
No fear he knew, no honour mov'd his breast.
The king intrepid dar'd the high alarm,
And fatal courage! scorn'd the dæmons arm.
Th' alarm spread, when in a vision'd dream,
A spirit arial fung this mystic theme.

(Sweet

(Sweet was his voice, melodious as the lyre,
Resembling fairies whom the gods inspire.)
“ Each artifice the dæmon tries in vain,
“ Vain his ambition, Kiûmers shall reign !”
On this Seâmuck, full of martial fire,
Call'd all his force, and brav'd the dæmon's ire.
A tyger's skin his manly limbs o'erspread,
No armour known, no helmets grac'd the head.
The hostile legions mov'd in firm array,
Front of the lines Seâmuck dares the fray.
The dæmon fought the youth ; ah ! fatal hour !
Both onward rush ; yet such his mighty power,
Soon the brave youth lay welt'ring in his gore,
While the black fiend his beauteous body tore.
His dire associates, full of impious joy,
Of club and vest despoil the lovely boy.
The grief-struck army mourn'd — with rapid wing
Fame spread the story to the anguish'd king.
Long sorrow sat on ev'ry feeling breast,
Till heav'n, by angels, thus its will exprest :

‘ Tears

“ Tears are of no avail ! dispel thy grief ;

“ Arm all your legions ; rouse each warlike chief :

“ ’Tis my decree, attack the fiend-like foe,

“ And bravely combat, blow revenge by blow.”

To heav’n the good old hero rais’d his eyes,

And greatful ! blest the goodness of the skies !

Revenge alone now fill’d the Persian’s breast,

Or day, or night, he knew no balmy rest.

On lov’d Seâmuck’s son his thoughts incline,

To teach in council as in arms to shine.

Hofhung his name : the king the youth addrest,

And thus declar’d the secrets of his breast :

“ Ere long in arms my marshall’d legions beam,

“ And hostile blood o’er yonder plain shall stream.

“ Thou must attend ; a few short minutes o’er,

“ These aged limbs will seek another shore.

“ On me the arial spirits gladly wait,

“ And e’en the brute creation guard my state.”

He spoke ; in bright array his troops appear,

But, feeble grown with age, he fought the rear.

High

High in the midst of the embattl'd host,
Young Hoshung stood, the royal Persian's boast.
Onward each army rush'd with martial glow,
Revenge and empire dwell upon the blow.
Immortal vigour fir'd the Persian train,
And clouds of dust o'ershadow'd all the plain.
Proud and audacious ! dauntful in the fight,
The dæmon rov'd, too confident of might.
His strokes on all re-echo, all engage,
As when the roaring lion hurls his rage.
The old king trembled as he view'd the force
Of the dire dæmons mow their dreadful course ;
'Twas then brave Hoshung, with undaunted might,
Sought the young dæmon through the thickest fight.
They met ; they fought ; the hero's patriot glow
Gave force and vigour o'er the treach'rous foe.
Long was the combat ; when the prince's arm,
Struck the pale dæmon, trembling with alarm.
Then hurl'd him from his courser as he fled,
And, as he fell, he lopp'd his impious head.

With

With conquest in his arms, the good old king,
(The assassin of his son having felt the sting
Of death and of remorse) resign'd to fate
The splendid trappings of his earthly state.
A name alone remains; the greatest pow'r
Secures no mortal from the fatal hour.
Yet though his life in each exertion past,
Th' effect he knew not, when he breath'd his last.
Brave Kiûmers, with patriotic sway,
First taught th' untutor'd nations to obey.
A few short moments close this troubled scene,
And life's at best a nugatory dream!
How fruitless grief! how vain the plaintive sigh!
To stop pale death, or raise the dying eye!

THE ARGUMENT.

THE introduction of agriculture—The discovery of mines—The rise of the religion of the Magi.

The character of Hoshung—He forms various implements—Attention to cultivation—To mining—To policy—The worship of fire instituted—The loom first in use—Ferdosi concludes his reign with moral reflections.

T H E

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

B O O K II.

HOSHUNG, on whom unblemish'd laurels shone,

Adorn'd for forty years th' imperial throne.

Just as a judge the legislator reigns,

And seven proud kingdoms were his blest domains.

Wide spread the virtues of his nations o'er,

And cities smil'd where deserts frown'd before.

Fame told the story to the wond'ring earth,
And nations blest the hour that gave him birth.
He from the quarry brought the iron ore,
And taught the smith its ever useful lore.
Within the mine the sparkling gems conceal'd,
To gazing eyes by Hoshung were reveal'd;
He form'd and gave the workman various tools,
And taught the architect to build by rules.
To ev'ry valued art his thoughts incline,
To plough the waste land, or improve the mine.
Through the scorch'd lands he bade canals to flow,
That corn might flourish, and the pasture grow.
Through ev'ry town he conduits past along,
Supplying water to the inland throng.
Canals were taught to flow through ev'ry place,
And commerce rear'd aloft her smiling face.
Bridges were form'd, where streams obstruct the way,
Opening new intercourse from day to day.
He taught to sow the seed, to reap the grain,
The arts of tillage were his constant strain.

Fruits

Fruits were the food of man till this blest time,
And leaves of trees sole shelter from the clime ;
Rules for society the chief creates,
And law and order grac'd his rising states.
Now policy, with eye extended, rose,
And bade the mountain-hind forget his woes.
Now tranquil pleasures form their rural life,
And scenes far varying from their former strife.
Bright-ey'd religion rear'd her cherub face,
For piety adorn'd the hero's race.
As once, attended by a gallant few,
He fought the high-lands, with a patriot view,
An object from afar appear'd to rise,
Of form immense, and of prodigious size ;
Sanguine its face, its eyes were ghastly blue,
Its body glaring shock'd the distant view ;
Through the whole air its dire obnoxious breath
Darkness diffus'd, and stench like putrid death :
Hoshung with dauntless steps approach'd the sprite,
And seiz'd a pond'rous stone with nervous might :

The

The serpent rear'd its crest; on Hoshung came,
And fearless threw the stone with dext'rous aim:
The serpent bent beneath the weighty blow,
And, groaning as he fled, life seem'd to flow:
The shatter'd stones in num'rous pieces start,
And sparks of fire emit from every part.
Amazement seiz'd the chief. The view, unknown,
Of fire emitting from repulsive stone,
First gave the pious thought, "Bend ev'ry knee,"
The chief exclaims, "'tis heav'n's supreme decree!
"To fire celestial let us altars raise,
"For God himself his attribute displays."
As the high priest of Mahommed divine,
Bends towards Mecca, to the sacred shrine —
So the new Magi, as their prince inspires,
Bow with devotion to the golden fires.
Conquest to kings have giv'n exalted fame,
And chiefs have reach'd a celebrated name.
Yet by this deed, the hero of his age,
Stands high recorded in th' historic page.

To

To raise new faith to Hoshung it was giv'n,
Who deem'd it the benevolence of heav'n.
This night the goblet crown'd the festive board,
This night was blest styl'd, and all ador'd;
Hoshung's new altars charm the gazing trains,
And oft inspir'd them all with fervent strains.
Each village bless'd him, each increasing town,
With heart-felt raptures hail'd their king's renown.
From age to age his praises will be sung,
Eternal goodness on his actions hung.
He chac'd the wild as at the early dawn,
The kingly lion and the rapid fawn.
He tam'd the lordly bull; to well-cloath'd meads
The gentle lambkin and the sheep he leads.
From the gray squirrel, from the rapid fawn,
From the sly fox were skins for cloathing drawn.
He spun the wool, explor'd each varied art,
And things of use were form'd from ev'ry part.
Here the scene closes; for the gallant mind
That labour'd for the good of human kind,

Paid nature's debt——the grateful world confest
His glorious actions and his patriot breast.
The muse historic crown'd his honour'd days,
And knowledge woo'd him to eternal praise.
His kingdom flourish'd by his mild domain,
And nature smil'd through all his happy reign.
Ah soon ! too soon ! the fates control his pow'r,
Nor could his goodness stop the fatal hour.
Grief, fortune often gives, and oft renown !
Her smile inconstant as her wav'ring frown.
A day must come when hope herself desists ;
It only leaves impenetrable mists.

T H E

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

B O O K III.

VOL. I.

P

T H E

THE ARGUMENT.

TAHMURAZ, *the enchainers of dæmons, assembles the learned—*
The Magi address them on the subject of his future government—He
improves on the plan of Hoshung—The character of the vizier—He
seizes on the leader of the dæmons, whose followers assemble, chuse a
leader, and conduct their forces against Tahmuraz—Are routed—
Their offers of submission—Different arts introduced through their me-
dium—The death of Tahmuraz—The reflections incidental to his
death.

T H E

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

B O O K III.

THE conqueror of dæmons, Hoshung's heir,

Brave Tahmuraz, then fill'd the regal chair ;

Soon he conven'd the magic priests of fire,

His actions mark'd him worthy of his fire.

In converse sage they pass'd th' instructive time,

And taught the monarch how to rule sublime.

Them he addrest: — “ Instruct me how to reign,

“ And what the duties of my state ordain.

“ Teach me proud vice far from my throne to chase,

“ And drive these dæmons headlong to disgrace ;

“ Whatever may advance my nations’ good,

“ Polish their manners, and improve their food.”

Their precious wool the sheep and lambkins yield,

And all the fleecy tribe that rove the field ;

The beauteous songsters that late flew on high,

And sung melodious through the azure sky,

Allur’d in averies, charm’d the wondering throng,

Pleas’d with the plumage and the warbling song.

The hawk and falcon by the hunters taught,

Birds through the air in artful windings fought.

The king’s vizier, pre-eminent in fame,

Folly in terror fled where’er he came.

All day religious thoughts his soul purfu’d,

Reflection crown’d him, and he took no food

Till sunset, when he waited on the king,

And told the road to glory’s heav’nly spring.

His

His fame for piety, to earth's extreme,
 Had rais'd him high, and was the patriot's theme.
 How vice to shun, impiety explode,
 How point to excellence the fairest road,
 His constant care ; and by his counsel sage,
 The king appear'd the hero of his age.
 One day the chief, as mounted on his steed,
 Seiz'd the first dæmon, ere he could proceed
 In magic safety : swift the nations flew,
 And for their king the honest fabre drew.
 The race of dæmons, with indignant strains,
 Beheld their leader in inglorious chains.
 They all conven'd, and vengeance swore aloud,
 Dire imprecations fill the horrid crowd.
 On royal Tahmuraz his girdle bound,
 And struck his axe tremendous on the ground.
 All the magicians, necromancers, all
 In mystic pray'rs their kindred dæmons call,
 And chose a leader — black as deadliest night,
 With eye of horror, rose th' infernal sprite ;

Such

Such noise and tumult, such tremendous cries,
 The dæmons howl, as echo to the skies;
 Dark was the face of heav'n ! and earth no more
 Its chearful tints and pleasing verdure wore ;
 Nor light nor object struck the blinded eye,
 Opaque was all beneath the solar sky ;
 But still the king, impatient for the fight,
 Commenc'd the battle in the shades of night ;
 He clasp'd his girdle and with rapid speed,
 Charg'd the fierce dæmon on his fiery steed.
 In monstrous forms, in shapes of livid fire,
 Arrang'd, the dæmons wait the royal ire.
 Firm they receiv'd him, and with desperate blows,
 Menac'd the bravest of their Persian foes.
 But Tahmuraz, intrepid in the fight,
 Quick hurl'd them headlong to the realms of night.
 Some by the axe were levell'd to the ground,
 And some in chains of iron strongly bound.
 All stood appall'd — for mercy they implore,
 And “mercy ! mercy !” was their general roar.

Then

Then thus:—" Oh ! spare us, monarch of the world,

" On us no longer be thy thunders hurl'd.

" Arts, that are ours, we will to thee impart,

" And own allegiance with submissive heart."

The king consents, impatient quite to know,

Arts, though instructed by a barbarous foe.

The dæmons freed, fair characters impart,

And writing now illumin'd ev'ry heart.

From age to age, ideas may be trac'd,

And royal actions by the muses grac'd.

The Roman, Persian, the Arabian style,

The Phelevi, Chinese, and Sadi smile,

With many more——The king for thirty years

Spread wide this novel art to all his peers.

Such a vizier, and such a chief alone

Cou'd give high lustre to an earthly throne.

His name will live to time's remotest end,

His labours prov'd him to mankind a friend.

Yet though his name had reach'd th' ethereal plain,

Low lies his ashes, silent is his strain.

THE ARGUMENT.

AN angel addresses Gernsheid ; rebukes him for not being active in the expulsion of the dæmonic customs—Prognosticates the favour of heaven—Thus inspired, he confines the dæmons—He forms various instruments and armour for the use of his army—He assembles the different sects, and according to their knowledge he assigns their different departments—He builds a magnificent palace entrenched round by the information and instruction of a dæmon—He first introduces the art of building—The people esteem him more than mortal—Pride takes possession of his senses—His fortune and eminence alter his former piety—His boasting expressions to the Magi—His glory begins to fade—The indignation of heaven—The king of Arabia, Merdaz, whose son Zohak, instigated by Ebles, the infernal, lays a snare for his father, in which he perishes—The artifices of Ebles—He leaves Zohak, and assuming a different form, returns—Introduces luxury—And in embracing Zohak, which is requested as a token of friendship, two serpents spring from the shoulders of that prince—He vanishes, and again appears in the semblance of a physician—Advises the daily application

cation of the brains of two men as a cure, and alleviation to the pain caused by the serpents—His advice is adopted—The nobility of Iran desert their monarch, and croud to the standard of Zohak—Gemshaid, with his army, meets him in the field—The flight of his army—Zohak marches to Iran—Gemshaid flies—Is seiz'd—Ferdosi's reflections—The description of Gemshaid's sisters, who are debauched by Zohak—Two men are sacrificed each day—The consultation of Armel and Germail—They are ordered for execution—The jailor releases one, and supplies his place with the brains of a lamb, and afterwards pursues the same conduct—Zohak, in a dream, sees three warriors, who tell him his future fate—He convenes the sages, and demands an exposition of his dream—The prognostic of the sages—The birth of Feredoon—His concealment by his parents—Nurtur'd by a cow—The researches and indignation of Zohak—Feredoon escapes from the pursuit of Zohak, with his mother Feranuk, to the hill of Elburs—The tyrant destroys the place where Feredoon had been concealed—The arrival of the fugitives at Elburs—The priest receives them—The exhortation of Feranuk—The house of Feredoon levelled by Zohak—He quits Elburs, and demands an account of his birth from Feranuk—The tale is related to him—He determines on revenge

—*The apprehensions of Zohak—He orders his nobles and the sages to sign a paper, attesting the goodness and excellence of his administration—The complaint of Gao, respecting the seizure of his son—The usurper orders him to sign the attestation—He refuses, and addresses the people—Flies to Feredoon—Is graciously received—The ban of Gao, from this period, the standard of the Persian empire—Feredoon takes leave of Feranuk—Marches to Arabia—A priest instructs him in the page of futurity—The attempt of his brothers, jealous of his eminence, to destroy him—He is informed of it in a dream—Prevents it—Marches to Bagdad and Jerusalem—Seizes the fort by surprize—Is seated on the throne of Zohak—Destroys the magicians—Is informed by the sisters of Gemsheid, that Zohak had marched to Hindoostan, to invoke the magicians to destroy him—Khundroo, a servant of Zohak, flies to his master with the intelligence, who affects to disbelieve it—The return of Zohak, who is taken and enchained in Dumavend—The reflections of Ferdosi.*

T H E

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

B O O K IV.

THEN Gemfheid reign'd — The virtues of his fire
Fill his young mind, and all his acts inspire.

The rich tiara grac'd his youthful head,

And all the wonted royalties were spread.

The greatful nations deem their prince a God,

And all th' aërials bend before his nod.

An angel's voice, attun'd to heav'nly strains,

Address the monarch of the Persian plains :

“ Why thus inactive, in inglorious ease,

“ Does Gemshêd slumber o'er divine decrees ?

“ Exalt to eminence thy high domains,

“ Expel the dæmon customs from thy plains ;

“ By land, by water, let your labours rise,

“ Fear not the dæmons, favour'd by the skies !”

No more was heard — The heav'n-taught monarch glows,

And chain'd in dungeons his dæmoniac foes,

Such were his actions, free from ev'ry crime,

That paradise threw wide the gate sublime :

The king, the priest of Magi, stood confest,

Equal in each ! a friend to the distressed.

The man of vice soon felt the awful rod ;

The good, illumin'd, bow'd before their God.

First various hostile implements he made,

Till his brave Persians were in arms array'd.

The iron he mallows, and the helmet forms,

And coats of mail defy impending storms.

Girths

Girths for the horse were form'd of felt alone ;
 The cuirass armour now defend his throne.
 Habits of war that glitter in the field,
 The missile weapon, and the glitt'ring shield,
 Were form'd by Gemsheid ; linen cloth, for cloaths,
 And the rich tissue, from his labours rose.
 To wash, to sow, to weave, his people learn ;
 Yet not content while more he cou'd discern.
 Well pleas'd was heav'n ! and earth with wonder view'd
 The various ways he excellence pursu'd.
 One bright example from each sect he chose,
 And fifty years the just selection close.
 The Aluzeban, ardent in their pray'rs,
 In caves the monarch plac'd exempt from cares.
 Not e'en the hero claim'd superior place,
 The first in honour are the first in grace.
 The Nasireans next in order shone,
 As lions brave, the pillars of his throne ;
 While fame to valiant deeds shall glory give,
 Their names, their martial eminence, shall live.

Another

Another sect was Osterush by name,
 The loom their labours — culture all their aim;
 Free is their spirit — all the world admires
 Their constant duties, and their steady fires.
 These they alone pursu'd — Then next arise
 The Artukushy, valiant, gen'rous, wise;
 Artists in peace, and foldiers on the plain;
 Thought and reflection follow'd in their train.
 These Gemsheid honour'd, and their worth displays,
 In gifts that shew'd him conscious of their praise.
 To each his duty did the chief assign,
 That all might follow the appointed line.
 A dæmon thus address'd th' imperial throne:
 " From clay and water, from the harden'd stone,
 " Form thou a model of a finish'd wall;
 " High let the building be o'erlooking all."
 This soon was rais'd in geometric line,
 And stone with mortar finish'd the design.
 A court with baths was built; tow'rs rear'd their head;
 A lofty palace rose, and terror fled.

From the rough stone, by aid of magic sound,
The ruby and the silver ore were found.
The variegated coral, sapphire blue,
And many a gem appear'd to mortal view.
Musk, amber, scented wood; each flow'ring bloom,
With fragrant roses, yield their rich perfume.
He built a vessel, launch'd it in the stream;
The artists copied, and admire the scheme.
Friend to desert, inimical to ill,
His open doors the poor and hungry fill.
Full fifty years in labours such as these
The monarch pass'd, regardless of his ease;
But now, alas! he thought his labours o'er,
That art or nature cou'd supply no more.
He deem'd himself of more than mortal birth,
Ally'd to heav'n — pre-eminent on earth.
A throne resplendent now his foul designs,
A blaze of gems on ev'ry pillar shines.
On this enthron'd, the dæmons raise the chair;
On this he tow'ring rode aloft in air.

Gazing

Gazing spectators crowd from all the earth,
And deem their prince of more than mortal birth.
The road with gems were strew'd; his splendid day
In festivals shall future times display.
Pleas'd were the nobles, wine, and flowing bowls,
With vocal music, charm their raptur'd souls.
So brilliant was his ev'ry act, that fame
Will ever wait upon his laurel'd name.
Three hundred years health smil'd upon his plains,
And death indignant fled his blest domains.
No indolence appear'd, no vagrants rose,
No sickness wither'd, no corroding woes.
But now his former splendor sets in night,
Its glory fades, and all his vaunted might.
The muses droop the impious strain to tell,
When Gemshaid thus began, inspir'd by hell :
“ Behold in me the monarch of the world,
“ By me all nature speaks, by me the thunder's hurl'd.
“ For me the dæmons all their magic spread,”
(So vain his soul he knew not what he said.)

His

His subjects too, forgetful of their God,
Follow his mandates, and obey his nod:
On thrones of splendor he his orders gave,
Soft music play'd, and songs unnerve the brave.
For many a year these transient glories rise,
Once heav'n his actions view'd with fav'ring eyes;
But now no more before his darken'd fight
The God appears —— 'twas all a gloomy night.
His eminence had clouded all his pow'rs ;
His God forsakes him, and his fortune low'rs.
Each aged seer he ordered from the field,
Then thus addrest, to ev'ry virtue steel'd !
“ This world is mine, no other God I know,
“ From me alone all excellence can flow.
“ No chief or monarch ever reach'd my name,
“ Tow'ring superior on the throne of fame.
“ Whate'er deserves attention, it is mine ;
“ Sleep, rest, and food, by my commands, are thine.
“ High walls I rais'd, cloaths I bestow'd on man ;
Mine are the nobles ; thrones, each martial clan.

“ Lives there a man who, vent’rous, dares to name

“ Another king immortaliz’d by fame?

“ Behold the dæmons tremble at my nod,

“ And own a just allegiance to the God.”

The pious seers, unable to reply,

Held down their mute-struck souls, and vented many a sigh.

Heav’n would no longer bear his impious pride,

Far spread the boast, and nations but deride.

No longer did he feel the heav’nly guard,

His soul to ev’ry former virtue barr’d.

Now all his sentiments from discord spring,

Destruction hover’d with insatiate wing.

Hear wisdom speak, her dictates are a prize,

Monarchs from piety superior rise.

When the august Omnipotent of heav’n,

From thy weak eyes and impious heart is driv’n,

Terror and fear with discord for thy guide,

Shall humble thee severely for thy pride.

The day of Gemsheid darken’d — and no more

His splendor rises — all his glory’s o’er.

Alarm’d

Alarm'd at the review, his timid mind
 Aw'd, no relief from piety can find.
 Impiety his former honour stain'd :
 Discord usurp'd the place where glory reign'd.
 The pious Merdaz in Arabia reigns,
 With num'rous herds that grace his fruitful plains ;
 His flocks unnumber'd, and his neighing steeds
 Bound o'er the fields, and crop the verdant meads.
 Zohak, his son, ten thousand horse commands ;
 Brave in the fields, he leads his victor bands
 In Deri Poorasp : for, by night and day
 Benevolence his generous acts display.
 In semblance of a sage, one morning came
 Th' infernal Ebles, ever damn'd to fame ;
 So wise and so mellifluent was his tongue,
 Ill-fated Zohak on his speeches hung ;
 Unconscious of deceit, so deeply laid,
 All his whole soul to Ebles was display'd.
 When this the infernal saw, invidious joy
 Cheer'd his dark thoughts, ambitious to destroy.

He tun'd his language to melodious strains,
And pour'd his poison into Zohak's veins.
'Twas then he spoke. " My sciences exceed
" All that man knows, or all the sages read."
The youth, impatient, urg'd him to impart
His letter'd knowledge, and superior art.
With artifice the horrid fiend reply'd,
" By solemn oath first chuse me for your guide ;
" Swear that attentive to my great design,
" Whate'er I say, whatever I enjoin,
" You will obey. My knowledge I will teach,
" And lead you far beyond all mortal reach."
Th' unwary Zohak swore : deluded youth !
To whom, unconscious, do you pledge your truth ?
He swore that silence shou'd the tale conceal !
'Twas then that Ebles broke the fatal seal :
" A son like you with ev'ry talent blest,
" With God-like virtues, in unwarlike rest,
" Thus doom'd, depriv'd of empire and of pow'r,
" To wait, unactive ! for an old man's hour,

" Argues

“ Argues a grov’ling foul——while thy ag’d Sire
 “ Lives glimm’ring on, suppress thy active fire——
 “ Long will he rule ; a slave thou must remain ;
 “ Seize on his sceptre, and assert thy reign.
 “ His throne is thine : obedient to thy guide,
 “ The world will own thee with a conscious pride.”
 Zohak attentive heard ; ambition, pow’r,
 Rag’d in his soul, and mark’d the chosen hour.
 A spark of virtue struggled in his heart ——
 “ Adopt some mode, where nature will not start.”
 Ebles with sternness answer’d——“ Take his seat,
 “ Or perjury is thine shouldst thou retreat.
 “ For perjury, will piety atone,
 “ Thus, thus ejected from a splendid throne ?
 “ For ages will your Sire in triumph reign,
 “ And thou, inglorious, curse the pious strain !”
 Alarm’d, the youth assents——no fears appal——
 “ But how, or where ? the king’s lov’d by all !”——
 “ Be silent only, and the means are mine ;
 “ Great shalt thou be, and like yon sun shall shine.”

A well

A well was sunk, and cover'd in the night;
A level plain it seem'd to mortal fight.
Merdaz each eve within the garden roves,
And bow'd before his God in sacred groves.
There lay the snare, alas! design'd by hell;
In it at eve the pious monarch fell,
Fearless of ill. For lions, though they rage,
Submissive wait upon a parent's age.
Zohak, whose soul was in th' infernal's pow'r,
No fear or sorrow knew — "Let the fates low'r;
"The throne is mine." — So ancient annals tell;
And Ebles smil'd to view the pow'r of hell.
The infernal now a beauteous shape assum'd,
And words more gracious all his thoughts illum'd.
Each pow'r was granted him; till then the earth
Yielded all food, and simple was its mirth.
No luxury it knew; the fowl, the sheep,
With various birds, fish from the watery deep,
Were dress'd by Ebles for the wond'ring king;
The winter, summer, autumn, and the spring,

Were

Were ranfack'd all to catch th' inglorious mind,
Whose fenfes were to luxury resign'd.
Zohak from Ebles, wond'ring, feeks to know,
From whence fuch knowledge, fuch improvements flow;
Whether of mortal or immortal race?
“ Say what rewards can fuch atchievements grace ! ”
To whom : — “ Oh monarch of Arabia's plain !
“ My fchemes, my labours, fhall not prove in vain.
“ Your kindnefs warms the flave of your defire ;
“ One fole request I crave — one only boon require ;
“ On thy immortal fhoulders let me place
“ My faithful head, and bow my bending face.”
Zohak, not confcious of impending ill,
Bids him his wifhes and his boon fulfil.
Ebles, the moment feiz'd with proud delight,
Touch'd either arm, and vanish'd from his fight.
Instant two ferpents fpring from either arm :
All gaze, all wonder, trembling with alarm ;
Erect they rofe, and all around them view'd,
Their open mouths demand immediate food.

All

All skill'd in med'cine, try their art in vain,
 All herbs prove fruitless to relieve the pain,
 Ebles, in habit of a feer, unknown,
 Appear'd, and thus address the royal throne;
 " With brains of men alone these serpents feed,
 " For this, no herb, no med'cine is decreed.
 " This will destroy them." Hell cou'd no more;
 The infernal revell'd, pleas'd with human gore,
 The world, alarm'd at Zohak's horrid powers,
 Crowd to his standard, and fill all his tow'rs,
 Fame spread the tale : Iran to Zohak run;
 The fate of wretched Gemsheid now begun.
 His nobles left him with the frantic crowd;
 Heav'n had forsook him ; still the monarch, proud
 Of his own pow'rs, dar'd Zohak to the fight;
 His army fled : his glories set in night.
 Iran to Zohak yielded up the throne,
 And Gemsheid's sorrows for his crimes atone.
 With all the pomp of war, a splendid train,
 The haughty Zohak reach'd Irania's plain.

The fall of Gemsheid rais'd the usurper high ;
Just the resentment of the injur'd sky !
Gemsheid the first, in these polluted times,
Ignobly fell, the victim of his crimes.
O'er many a nation did the monarch fly,
With fear attendant, for his hour was nigh.
As wading o'er the Cheen, all plung'd in woe,
The guards of Zohak, that usurping foe,
Seize the faint prince, and sawing through his frame,
Left him, inglorious spectacle of shame !
The adverse fates o'er all his fortunes low'r,
And stars relentless doom'd the fatal hour.
In early years, the fervency of youth
Points ev'ry action, dignified by truth.
But when the mind in life's more vent'rous storm,
By pride or by ambition we deform,
Imperious passions roll in rapid streams,
Alas ! far varying from his morning beams.

Say what avails it, that unnumber'd years,
In fates uncertain tide, above my peers,
Shou'd pass in fervent hope, or anxious fears ?
Since death, that fatal instrument of time,
Closes the scene, where fortune rode sublime.
Snatch me, kind heav'n ! where in celestial themes,
No dazzling meteors, or no golden dreams,
Mislead the senses ; there the swelling soul
No more vain gleams of frantic pow'r control.
To Zohak's armies all the vagrants crowd ;
Splendor and pomp the vilest actions throwd.
Afar the wise and virtuous forrowing fled ;
The vile and worthless rear aloft their head.
All excellence retir'd with rapid speed,
For vice with Zohak only cou'd succeed.
Falsehood in triumph walk'd th' usurper's court !
Truth lay enchain'd : here truth was but a sport.
All the fair females were their wanton prey,
Lawless and wild, impatient of delay ;

Though

Though the mild lustre of each softer charm
Might awe their hearts, and even vice disarm.
Lovely as fairies, whose all-beauteous forms
Each attribute of blushing virtue warms.
Fair as an angel on the lucid green,
The modest Sheirnaz had a mind serene.
And Arnewas, whose charming looks disclose
The lily's tints, and blushes of the rose.
Sisters of Gemsheid, though, ill-fated pair!
Doom'd the sad victims to a dark despair,
To Zohak led, whose lust no virtue awes,
Whose hell-born passions were his only laws.
Their virtues were deform'd by magic arts,
Stain'd were their persons, and defil'd their hearts.
Murder was all the joy of Zohak's soul;
In death and rapine all his moments roll.
Two men each day the victims of his ire,
Nor royal birth, nor deeds of martial fire,
Cou'd snatch from fate. Two youths of noble birth,
(Alike distinguish'd for peculiar worth)

On Zohak's deeds revolve ; for none control
His plund'ring armies, his rapacious foul ;
His dragon dæmons, whose devouring rage,
Spread desolation o'er a groaning age ;
“ Let us, fond brother ! to the jailor go,
“ And teach fair mercy in his breast to glow ;
“ For ah ! too soon, we may the victims fall,
“ Let one but live to wing the vengeful ball.”
The brothers seek the dungeon of despair,
And find the mandate for their death was there.
Seiz'd, fetter'd, and to gloomy dungeons led,
To scenes of murder, mansions of the dead.
And now the awe-struck jailor mourn'd within,
The murd'rous instrument of death and sin !
The brothers silent snatch'd the last embrace,
Grief and despair sat pictur'd in their face.
Mute was their voice, by agony suppress'd,
And silence spoke the feelings of the breast.
The jailor one releas'd : “ While in thy bloom,
“ From cities fly to deserts' horrid gloom ;

“ (He

“ (He counsell’d well) where, whelm’d in deepest shade,
“ No Zohak governs by a dæmon’s aid.
One hapless youth was sacrificed; his brain,
Mix’d with a lamb’s, relieve th’ usurper’s pain.
Thirty the jailor fav’d — in distant groves,
Far from his native soil, the wand’rer roves.
The brains of lambs the pious fraud bestows;
The pious fraud not e’en the serpent knows.
The lovely Arnewas, in beauty’s pride,
(Her lordly tyrant slumb’ring by her side,
To all the lustre of her charms unjust)
Was treated as the common slave of lust.
To his disorder’d fancy in a dream,
Three youthful warriors o’er his slumbers gleam:
Dauntless they rose, in shining armour drest;
Tow’ring aloft, one younger than the rest,
Clad and accout’red in the pomp of war,
Their royal presence glitter’d from afar.
He fancied that the younger forward sprung,
And struck his head till it with horror rung;

He

He fancied, that while sprawling on the ground,
 His writhing body was in fetters bound :
 He fancied that they bound his head and hands,
 To caves they dragg'd him in severest bands.
 All turbulent with rage, he foaming rose,
 The dream prophetic in his fancy glows.
 He roar'd so loudly, with so fierce a strain,
 The pillars of the palace shook again.
 All the fair females, as their fears inspire,
 Demand the cause of such unusual ire.
 " Why when repos'd the earth's great master lays,
 " Whom nature and th' aërial world obeys,
 " What can alarm ? for from the deep profound,
 " To yon celestial moon, your praises found."
 To Arnewas he spoke : " I will reveal ;
 " My secret thoughts, nor this from thee conceal :
 " When you shall listen to the direful tale,
 " Thy organs and the spring of life will fail."
 When thus the fair : " To me the cause relate,
 " Counsel shall aid thee to arrest your fate.

" For

" For wise reflection in my bosom dwells."
 To Arnewas his dream the tyrant tells ;
 Who thus advises : " First consult the sage ;
 " Their just reflections shall thy cares assuage.
 " Thy throne, the globe — thy reign, the voice of fame ;
 " Auspicious stars have crown'd thy laurell'd name.
 " By man, by dæmon, by the fairy train,
 " Thy mandates are obey'd, avow'd thy reign ;
 " All in astronomy, or magic skill,
 " Convene, and order thy imperial will ;
 " Demand the cause of such illusions dire,
 " By whom to be dethron'd ; by whom expire ;
 " By dæmons, or by fairies, or by man ?
 " Fear not th' event, and thence direct your plan."
 The well-pleas'd tyrant, raptur'd at the strain,
 Conven'd the Magi, and the letter'd train.
 Now fable night had clos'd her raven wings,
 And the green grove with vocal music rings.
 The orient dawn appear'd serenely mild ;
 Nature with renovating splendor smil'd.

When

When yon bright orb a brilliant lustre shed,
 With rubies spangling ev'ry mountain head:
 The trees were purpl'd o'er with radiant beams,
 And the vales glisten'd with their lucid streams.
 To all the sages Zohak tells the tale, —
 Retiring to consult, with terror pale.
 The tyrant orders that without delay,
 A quick solution chase his fears away.
 In private the arcana of our fate,
 What's good, what's vile, these Magi sage relate.
 "Who shall my throne, or my tiara, grace?"
 Zohak exclaims, "Who dares usurp my place?"
 "Tell, tell me all, or by th' immortal God
 "You fall the victims to my vengeful rod."
 The sages were alarm'd, with fear impress'd,
 No voice cou'd speak the terror of their breast.
 In secret they bewail'd their mournful fate;
 "Death is our lot, shou'd we the truth relate!"
 Three days elaps'd, not one adventurous spoke;
 The fourth, the tyrant thus the silence broke:

"And

“ And are you all resolv’d on instant death ?

“ Declare the causes, or resign your breath.”

They bow’d their heads, blood gush’d into their eyes,

Low were their hearts, they answer’d by their sighs.

When one more bold, in sapience more renown’d,

Thus spoke the tyrant, with prophetic sound :

“ Let no alarms disturb your soft repose,

“ That man must fall each sapient mortal knows.

“ Monarchs have reign’d, and from their throne expell’d,

“ Have died, or others have their sceptres held ;

“ Though were your frame of iron, still the fates

“ Enforce the fix’d decrees, and destin’d states.

“ That chief, who laid you level with the earth,

“ Will fill the throne, and of illustrious birth :

“ His name is Feredoon ; by him you bleed ;

“ His stars propitiate, ’tis by heav’n decreed.

“ In youth exalted to the fav’ring skies,

“ As the tall cypress will the hero rise ;

“ So the rich tree adorn’d with clust’ring fruit,

“ Yields its sweet virtues to the slender shoot.

" Of polish'd steel his radiant sword will shine,
 " Fatal to thee, to thy usurping line.
 " A cow will mark the sword that gives the wound,
 " And far from cities will thy soul be bound."
 Then Zohak thus : " Why shou'd he rise my foe ;
 Why bind in chains ; why give the fatal blow ?"
 The sage replies, " If free from vice or stain,
 " You need not dread, exempt from mortal pain.
 " His fire you murder'd ; this awakes his rage :
 " A cow will nurture first his early age.
 " This cow will fall the victim of your ire ;
 " Her image you will see as you expire."
 When this he heard he utter'd many a groan,
 And, fainting, fell from his resplendent throne,
 Pallid with fear : when life reviv'd again,
 On the rich throne he sat, with anxious pain ;
 He watch'd with care, and sending faithful spies
 T' observe the moment Feredoon shou'd rise.
 No gentle sleep, no food, no soft repose,
 The tyrant knew, o'ercharg'd with various woes ;

Ere many a fearful, penfive year was o'er,
He thought the gloomy prospect dawn'd once more,
Now Feredoon was born ; the smiling train
Beheld a favour with exulting strain.
Straight as the cyprefs ; in his face appears,
A regal lustre far above his peers.
In form, a Gemsheid, like the sun he rose,
His action with immortal splendor glows.
As earth is cultur'd by ethereal show'rs,
So wisdom polishes the mental pow'rs.
Around his head the stars propitiate play,
To him the cow Purmahy bends her way.
From home the boy his anxious mother bears,
And chang'd the native colour of his hairs.
Many astronomers, and Magi sage,
Foretel the future glories of his age.
They praise Purmahy, of such beauteous mould,
And sapience new to animals foretold.
Still Zohak searches with incessant fear,
Abteen, the fire of Feredoon, too near,

In terror fled ; though death his steps purfu'd,
He in each face the tyrant's mandate view'd.
Thus when with horror, and with dire dismay,
The victim dreads to fall the lion's prey,
Abteen was captur'd by the tyrant's spies,
Bound like a timid deer, the hunter's prize.
His wife, so late embellish'd with the pride
Of orient gems, with fortune's flowing tide,
Pensive, disconsolate, with anxious pain,
Seeks, with her darling boy, the desert plain :
Feranuk was her name, of form divine,
Of sense superior, of illustrious line.
She search'd the desert, there Purmahy found,
And thus the shepherd spoke, with plaintive sound ;
The purple drops bedew'd her lovely eyes,
Each word impeded with affecting sighs :
“ Ah ! take the child, the infant of despair,
“ And nourish him with all a mother's care.
“ Be thou a father to my darling boy,
“ The future hope of ev'ry promis'd joy.

“ The

“ The milk of yon fair cow will please the child,
“ And save a parent from distraction wild.
“ This, if accorded, I no more repine,
“ And my whole soul with gratitude is thine.”
“ Be that my care,” the gentle shepherd cries ;
She gave the infant from her longing eyes.
“ Three years,” she said, “ with milk the infant feed,
“ And let his tender age for mercy plead.”
Still Zohak not relaxes ; ev’ry foil,
Each birth is scrutiniz’d with anxious toil :
Nor cou’d Purmahy’s celebrated name
Escape the eager search or voice of fame.
The fair Feranuk, to disguise her form,
Conscious and fearful of th’ impending storm,
With darkest tints despoils each radiant grace,
And tinges all the roses in her face ;
She seeks the desert, where the darling boy
Fills all her thoughts, and gives a gleam of joy.
She spoke : “ No longer on this desert plain,
“ (’Tis wisdom dictates) can my child remain.

“ From

" From this magician, Feredoon I bear,
 " And seek in Hindostan a refuge there.
 " Far from his native clime my child expel,
 " And fly to Elburs, where the Magi dwell.
 Rapid she flew, though grief her bosom tore,
 The child to Elburs' sacred hill she bore;
 There to the priest, secluded from mankind,
 She spoke the feelings of a parent's mind.
 " A fugitive from Iran, reverend seer!
 " With sorrow torn, and ev'ry anxious fear,
 " Now bows before you. 'Tis decreed by fate,
 " This boy shall triumph in imperial state;
 " Shall seize usurping Zohak's splendid throne,
 " And lay the tyrant low, with many a groan.
 " Be as a fire to him; still guard his youth;
 " Raise him to manhood, dignified by truth."
 Purmahy's fame had reach'd the tyrant's ear,
 Too late he found the object of his fear.
 Zohak, indignant, foam'd with furious ire,
 Rage seiz'd his soul, and all his passions fire;

As when fierce elephants, provok'd, in vain
 Seek the proud female, tearing up the plain.
 The victim of his rage Purmahy fell,
 Each hind was murder'd by this fiend of hell.
 Burnt was each cottage, and the verdant green,
 Torn by the tyrant's rage, no more was seen.
 To Abteen's roof he march'd; no victim found;
 Enrag'd, his house he levell'd to the ground.
 To manhood rising now the youth ascends;
 His steps great Feredoon from Elburs bends;
 Seeks his fond mother, clinging to her breast,
 And eager thus impatiently address'd;
 " Say from what race I sprung? from whence I came?
 " Should strangers question, I should sink with shame.
 " To me the secret of my birth reveal,
 " My fire, my origin, no more conceal."
 Feranuk thus replies: " From Iran sprung,
 " Abteen thy fire, wise, valiant, brave, and young.
 " From Tahmuraz he rose, of royal race;
 " No stain, no vice, thy warlike fires disgrace.

" The

- “ The fondest husband ! ever flow my sighs !
 “ For thee, my Feredoon, thy father dies.
 “ And from that hour, the source of all my woes !
 “ This breast, alas ! has never known repose.
 “ Zohak, accurs’d magician ! gave the blow
 “ Design’d for thee. I snatch’d thee from the foe.
 “ Revolving years conceal’d thee from mankind,
 “ Nor durst I speak the anguish of my mind.
 “ Two serpents rose on Zohak’s either arm,
 “ And brains of men alone their rage disarm.
 “ Depress’d by sorrow, thee, my darling child !
 “ I bore to mountains, and to deserts wild ;
 “ There in the deep recess, devoid of fear,
 “ Thy name I thought would never reach his ear.
 “ Deck’d with the brightest hues, on distant ground,
 “ For thee design’d, a beauteous cow I found ;
 “ So bright her hues, in vain the painter tries
 “ To imitate the variegated dyes.
 “ Her keeper nurs’d thee with a parent’s care,
 “ Purmahy’s milk preserv’d me from despair.

“ In

" In manly strength you grew ; the voice of fame
 " To the fell monster told thy infant name.
 " The cow he murder'd ; when, with rapid wing,
 " We fled to Iran from the tyrant king.
 " Far from our native soil the tempest low'rs ;
 " Thy palace falls ; thy father's boasted tow'rs."
 Now Feredoon all glow'd with gen'rous ire,
 Now sorrow rises, and now passions fire.
 He spoke :—" Shou'd lions in a cavern dwell,
 " Or live in peace, who cou'd their prowess tell ;
 " From martial deeds arose the hero's fame,
 " And splendid actions raise a splendid name.
 " What this magician dar'd is past——'tis time
 " To wear the sword, and sting him for his crime.
 " Aided by heaven, I light the vengeful brand ;
 " The murd'rer falls by this avenging hand."
 The tender parent, anxious for her boy,
 Replies :—" Thou art too feeble to annoy
 " A king encircled with a warlike band,
 " High thron'd in pow'r, and led by fortune's hand.

“ Say, what allies will aid thy single arm ?

“ Or who protect thee from impending harm ?

“ Quit then this passion, this impetuous rage,

“ Let peace and solitude thy cares assuage.

“ Youth dictates passion wisdom will condemn ;

“ The light of reason is the purest gem.

“ These wise reflections in your bosom bear ;

“ View varying counsel as the passing air.

The name of Feredoon, with awful fear,
Still trembling vibrates on the tyrant's ear ;
Though arm'd with sceptres, yet his spies, in vain,
Search ev'ry city, wood, or desert plain.
One day when seated on his ivory throne,
When o'er his brow the rich tiara shone,
He call'd the nobles, and each martial band ;
Round the high palace warlike legions stand.
Each sage conven'd, whose scientific rays
The lustre of the richest gem displays.

Then

Then thus : " One foe alone can dare my pow'r,
 " From him my splendor sinks, my fortunes low'r.
 " Though sapient, young, and of illustrious race,
 " Of polish'd manners, and of manly grace,
 " This foe the Magi counsell'd to destroy,
 " To plunge in shades of night this rival boy.
 " Not that I dread his sapience or his hate,
 " I tremble only at the will of fate ;
 " I fear the stars propitiate may design
 " To snatch my sceptre, and erase my line.
 " More force must arm, the dæmons, fairies, man,
 " Must guard incessant to avert his plan.
 " You know the motives that my soul alarm :
 " I try the dire predictions to disarm ;
 " Let each describe how excellence has flow'd,
 " That truth and goodness in my actions glow'd."
 Each chief attests, and marks it with his name,
 How Zohak merited imperial fame.
 A voice was heard among the list'ning croud,
 With deep-ton'd sorrow, with impatience loud.

Him Zohak call'd, and, seating near the peers,
 The cause demanded of his flowing tears.
 "What cause but thou?" undaunted, he reply'd;
 "Justice I seek! and be it not deny'd.
 "My name is Gao. Anguish fills my breast;
 "If thou art just my wrongs will be redrest.
 "Your will has tortur'd all my bleeding soul,
 "New anguish writhes me, and new sorrows roll.
 "Why seize my son? oh! give him me again,
 "If free from crime——mark well the parent's pain.
 "When old men die, if yet their children live,
 "The poor remains of life they freely give.
 "My peace is gone; faint is the old man's pow'r;
 "My son is gone; farewell each chearful hour!
 "Say, what pretext cou'd cause so base a deed?
 "Dark is my close of life, shou'd Armel bleed.
 "Humble I am, a blacksmith is my trade,
 "A wretched parent seeks the sable shade.
 "Thou art a king, for thee the serpents rise;
 "Then view my humble pray'r with fav'ring eyes.

“Thy

“ Thy royal mandate seven proud realms obey,

“ Why spread on one so low such dire dismay ?

“ Say, will you triumph in a parent's pains ?

“ And to the serpent sacrifice their brains !”

With eye aghast the tyrant trembling hears ;

The just remarks appall'd his conscious ears.

He mildly answer'd, “ Shall thy sorrows close :

“ This paper sign'd, each sage, each warrior knows

“ Truth to declare, do thou attest the same ;

“ With all these reverend men include thy name.”

Gao the paper read ; with fix'd disdain

He view'd the chiefs, and, with indignant strain,

Thus spoke : “ Ye vile apostates to your God,

“ Why bow submissive to a satan's nod ?

“ No fear shou'd tempt me to attest a lye ;

“ I see no terror in a tyrant's eye.”

He fled the court, enrag'd the scroll he tore,

And with his son he sought some happier shore.

The suppliant throng address'd th' astonish'd king :

“ Long may you reign, rais'd high on fortune's wing ;

“ May

“ May conquest crown thee, may thy victor band

“ Thy trophies spread o’er ev’ry hostile land.

“ With what superior mind his rage you bore !

“ How calmly did you view the writing tore !

“ Thy high pre-eminence this Gao scorn’d ;

“ Doubtless by foes, by Feredoon fuborn’d.

“ ’Tis him he seeks.” Quickly the tyrant spoke :

“ My mind, astonish’d, was by fortune broke.

“ Fate hovers round ; such insolence before

“ I never heard, and let the tempest roar ;

“ When Gao spoke, by secret impulse prest,

“ His words struck terror to my startled breast.

“ When mov’d with grief, he struck his anguish’d head,

“ A gloomy horror o’er my senses spread.

“ So when high tempests, and loud storms o’erwhelm,

“ The trembling pilot shudders at the helm.

“ I could not fathom the decrees of fate,

“ Fear aw’d my senses and appall’d my state.”

As Gao rode, the people crouding round,

Asssemble, and the trump of justice found.

The

The blacksmith spoke ; (the emblem of his trade,,

The leathern apron in his hand display'd)

Loud acclamations rend the vaulted skies,

When thus, indignant, to the throng he cries :

“ Ye pious men, obedient to your God,

“ Seek Feredoon, and spurn the tyrant's rod.

“ His foul, the slave of hell, and heav'n his foe ;

“ For Feredoon let ev'ry bosom glow ?

“ Zohak, infernal fiend ! condemns the just ;

“ To foes, to dæmons, only will he trust.”

Though Gao knew not Feredoon's abode,

Whole realms he travers'd, and alone he rode ;

At length with joy he reach'd the destin'd place,

And pleasure sparkled in his glowing face.

Aloud the friends of Feredoon exclaim,

“ Behold a warrior comes of mighty name.

“ See his strong arms a leathern standard bear,

“ It glitters like a *comet in the air*.”

With richest gems, brocade, and purest gold,

The ban adorn'd by Feredoon behold :

Aloft:

Aloft he bore it ; from afar its rays,
Like the full moon, a brilliant beam displays.
His standard, emblem of victorious fields,
Conquest and triumph to the victor yields.
Gold fringe, and pendant jewels, raise its fame,
The ban of Gao was the standard's name——
Still more adorn'd, plac'd in the royal hall,
This ban the warriors Actur Gavean call.
Succeeding kings, proud of the mighty prize,
Stud it with jewels of the richest dies.
Sometime by Feredoon conceal'd, till fate
With fav'ring smiles adorn'd his future state.
The day of Zohak darken'd ; the brave boy
To his fond mother ran with anxious joy ;
All arm'd compleatly. On his head he bore
The crown Kianian, by his fathers wore ;
And thus address : “ I seek the martial plain ;
“ Do thou our God address with fervent strain.
“ Pray'rs are accepted by the pow'rs divine ;
“ Success attends them at the awful shrine.”

The

The parent sigh'd.——“Thy zeal I cannot blame;
 “May God preserve thee, and exalt thy fame;
 “That heav’n may guard thee from the hostile blow;
 “That vice may find in thee an adverse foe.”
 He bow’d, and, mounting his Arabian steed,
 Observ’d what’s good and ill, the various meed,
 The actions of mankind; revolving o’er
 Their different passions, and their changing lore.
 Two brothers eminent, of elder birth,
 Attend his steps, distinguish’d for their worth.
 Katâbus one, and Neiknham, gen’rous name!
 Excell’d in martial arts, and op’ning fame.
 To them the hero spoke: “Be ever blest;
 “Let joy and virtue dignify thy breast.
 “For me, so heav’n decrees—superior fate
 “Attends my fortunes, big with future state.
 “Haste to the smith, a sword resplendent bring.”
 His order they obey with rapid wing.
 The master-smith attends them to the chief;
 He drew the model, grateful in his grief!

The figure of a cow adorns the steel;
Its tempered force the man of vice will feel.
The chief approves, the gorgeous ban displays,
Like the bright orb of day, a splendid blaze!
The smith the chief assures of future spoil,
And many a gift rewards him for his toil.
“ If Zohak falls, high will I raise thy fame,
“ Thy labours triumph in a glorious name.
“ With pow’r adorn’d shall white-rob’d justice rise,
“ And meek religion, fav’rite of the skies!
“ Mercy with piety shall radiant smile;
“ The gen’rous monarch spurns the man of guile.”
Then lifting to the sun his eager eye,
His father’s fate remember’d with a sigh.
He marches on, the face of nature smiles,
And stars propitiate crown his future toils.
The well-arm’d warrior to his standard crowds,
In throngs as num’rous as the passing clouds;
With acclamations loud they rend the air;
Camels and elephants his baggage bear.

On the right wing the brave Katâbus stands;
And on the left, young Neiknham leads the bands.
As fleet as winds they march in firm array,
Each warrior glows impatient for the fray.
They reach the Arabian fields, encamp the train,
There pious priests exult in heavenly strain.
To the high priest a chosen chief he sends,
When night o'er earth her sable mantle bends.
To him the priests a pious sage depute,
Whose heavn'ly wisdom stood in high repute;
Black were his tresses, reaching to the earth,
His face a houri, of celestial birth:
An angel he appear'd from that blest plain
Where happy spirits in Elyzium reign.
To Feredoon his happier lot reveals,
Nor from his mind the destin'd ill conceals.
In form a fairy, in his looks are seen
A radiant splendor and a mind serene;
The source of knowledge to his view display'd,
And told the secrets of the magic aid.

“ Such is the will of heav’n ! ” the hero cry’d ;
His heart dilating with a conscious pride.
A new-born joy irradiates o’er his face,
Blooming with youth, and ev’ry manly grace ;
A simple table cheers his gen’rous breast,
And sleep invites him, by fatigue o’erprest.
The heav’nly seer, remote from ev’ry eye,
Had told the mandate of the vaulted sky ;
The brothers heard it ; jealous of his pow’r,
Rebellious counsels in their bosoms low’r.
Though in soft slumbers Feredoon reclin’d,
By heav’n’s high aid he knows their impious mind.
Far from the camp they rove in secret guise,
And seek to ruin what their fate denies.
Dark was the night, the howling tempest blows ;
Near to the camp a lofty mountain rose :
They reach the height ; a pond’rous, craggy stone,
By them, ungenerous ! on his tents is thrown,
Wak’d by the rumbling noise ; so heav’n ordains,
In the midway the dreadful stone remains

By

By magic skill ; they startl'd at the sight :

“ 'Tis God decrees ; our fate is set in night ;

“ Great will our brother and the hero rise :

“ Vain to oppose the mandate of the skies.”

Swift to the presence Feredoon sublime

Commands the chiefs, though silent on their crime,

Observant of their deeds with patriot care :

Their down-cast eyes the conscious guilt declare.

Gao attends ; of brave, exalted mind ;

The ban of Gao in the army shin'd.

With all the glow which youthful warriors fires,

When danger animates and fame inspires,

The chief to Arvend leads his martial train,

Arvend (the Tygris call'd in modern strain)

Upon its banks fam'd Bagdad's lofty tow'rs

Shine splendid, like the sun, through vernal showers.

Boats to collect, to pass the rapid tide,

The chief directs : impatient, by his side,

The army throngs : strict orders were enjoin'd,

Not one of all the train should stay behind.

The

The timid boatmen fly, they leave the shore,
And to the other bank their vessels bore.
Enrag'd the hero ey'd th' impetuous stream,
And daring actions in his bosom beam ;
His belt Kianian on his waist he bound ;
His foaming courser, for his strength renown'd,
Intrepid plunges in the rapid waves,
All fear disdaining, ev'ry danger braves.
His army, glowing from so bold a deed,
Through the strong current spur the furious steed.
Led on by glory, yet by toil oppress'd,
The wond'ring army almost sink to rest.
Black was th' ethereal sphere ; the fable night,
Now darkness shrouds, now shows a glimm'ring light.
They reach'd the shore ; on march his martial pow'rs,
Jerusalem displays her lofty tow'rs.
(In Phelevi, Rai Kuttush is its name,
In words Arabian, House of Pious Fame)
Here stood a fort by impious Zohak built,
A model of his greatness, and his guilt.

When

When nearer he approach'd, by glory prest,
The view of empire fir'd his ardent breast.
Now big with fate behold th' important hour ;
Distant a mile, it seem'd one rising tow'r !
The planet Saturn not more high appears ;
It seem'd a star in the celestial spheres.
Not Jupiter more brightly guilds the skies,
Than this fam'd city, his triumphant prize.
Here festivals, and ebrious scenes of joy,
The gay luxurious residents employ ;
Now Feredoon exclaims with fervent strain,
“ This is the castle where the serpents reign ;
“ This scene of splendor ! this the scene of guilt !
“ And yon high fort, by impious Zohak built,
“ Let us, Iranians ! level with the ground
“ Ere th' usurper's guards shall hear the sound
“ Of hostile armies——when their num'rous trains
“ Will dare the battle, covering all the plains.”
Thus having said, the brave Kianian boy
Spurr'd on his steed, impell'd by furious joy.

High

High flam'd his sword, no force can dare its rays,
E'en dæmons shrink before its dreadful blaze.
The sentinels with shudd'ring terror fled,
To heav'n with gratitude he rais'd his head.
Ent'ring the castle, now the scene of fear,
He found a talisman aloft in air ;
Seizing the symbol, on its figur'd signs
Were idols grav'd, and dire dæmoniac shrines ;
Far different from the faith the hero bore,
Or those who piously their God adore :
Each dæmon black, and each magician dire,
Was scourg'd, and sentenc'd to perpetual fire.
The chief reposes, all his glories own ;
He sits in triumph on the tyrant's throne.
Conquest and wisdom lead him to renown,
And heav'n rewards him with a splendid crown.
Through ev'ry palace, o'er each neighb'ring plain,
Through the whole fort, was Zohak fought in vain.
All the fair women, whom the tyrant plac'd
In wall'd apartments, were by nature grac'd ;

Their

Their beauties charm'd the impious Zohak's court,
Lost in lascivious ease, and wanton sport.
In indolence they pass'd their lascive hours,
And gay luxuriance enervates their pow'rs.
The chief directs that first ablutions clear;
That virtue be instill'd in ev'ry ear;
That faith new born irradiate ev'ry mind;
That each polluted soul should be refin'd!
Gemshaid's fair sisters smile with new-born grace,
And livelier tints adorn the roseate face.
With softest accents they the chief address;
" Blest be thy days, and blest thy gen'rous breast;
" Say by what stars propitiate do you shine?
" What God protects you; what exalted line?
" The lion's den that thus you greatly brave,
" That thus, unhurt! you dare the hostile wave.
" The dire magician stabb'd our peaceful mind,
" Where faith and innocence were late combin'd.
" How has our days in grief-worn sorrow flow'd!
" Now lost in woe! and now with anger glow'd!

- “ Of mortal shape appears his outward form,
“ Though curs’d Ahermen’s wiles his foul deform.
“ Such deeds as thine no mortal dar’d before ;
“ Transcendent boldness, and surpassing lore !
“ To seize a throne by warriors circl’d round,
“ Though millions guard, though hostile realms surround.”
The chief replies :—“ The blind, the fickle queen,
“ Fortune, for ever does not smile serene.
“ I came for vengeance, and in me you view
“ The son of Abteen, whom the tyrant flew :
“ Him to expel I came, to seize the throne ;
“ My nurse, the cow Purmahy, not unknown.
“ Say what dire thought the tyrant’s soul employs,
“ Who without cause a speechless brute destroys ;
“ These are the motives which my passions fire ;
“ I came from Iran, as the Gods inspire,
“ See on this sword Purmahy’s image grav’d,
“ In vain the tyrant’s arms the image brav’d ;
“ He dies ; and mercy supplicates in vain,
“ Sinking for ever in eternal pain.”

Thus

Thus having said, Zohak's prophetic dream,

To Arnewas recall'd the former theme.

"And art thou, Feredoon," the fair rejoins,

"Born to destroy the tyrant's curs'd designs?

"Just are thy actions; thy victorious reign

"Will level vice, and view th' usurper slain;

"Conquest is thine, the world thy nod obeys,

"And realms subdu'd will sound thy mighty praise.

"Of royal race, one fate has doom'd our hours,

"Unwilling victims to a tyrant's pow'rs.

"Wedded to him; a serpent's slave he proves,

"With never-ceasing fear the monster moves.

"Say, cou'd delight on such a life attend,

"Say, thou protector, guardian, brother, friend?"

To them the chief—"The past 'tis vain to mourn,

"The monster falls, and pleasure shall return.

"But tell me true in what recess he lies,

"Point out his refuge, and the tyrant dies."

They thus reply: "In Hindostan he roves,

"And seeks thy downfall in the magic groves;

- “ Nor rest, nor tranquil slumbers cheer his night,
“ Thy image haunts him, ever in his fight.
“ He tries the pow’rs of magic on thy life,
“ Each day he sharpens his affassin knife.
“ All fear, and all detest his murd’ring soul,
“ With frantic passions all his moments roll.
“ He thinks each instant that you seize his state;
“ A reverend seer inform’d him of his fate ;
“ Torn by contending passions, scorning heav’n,
“ His soul, like fire, before the wind is driv’n.
“ To ease his pain, on brains the serpent feeds,
“ To ease his pain, the whole creation bleeds.
“ On Indian plains, to meliorate his grief,
“ In vain the fell magician seeks relief.
“ Thy words will be fulfill’d, most reverend seer !
“ Just the prediction, and thy sapience clear !
“ Nor night nor day a moment’s peace he knows,
“ Torn by th’ serpents the curs’d wand’rer goes ;
“ His period of return is near ; from clime to clime
“ He roves, and strives t’ obliterate his crime.”——

The

The chief attentive heard : to one just slave,
Affairs of state in absence Zohak gave.
Khundroo his name ; to Feredoon he came,
And saw the monarch, saw him crown'd by fame.
Saw him erect, of manly martial form,
And startl'd, conscious of the rising storm.
Straight as the cypress, by his royal side
Stood Sheirnaz, Arnewas, his master's pride.
The city throng'd with troops, the palace gates
Guarded impregnable to hostile states.
To Feredoon, submissive, to the ground
He bow'd ; — “ Oh ! king, with glory circled round,
“ Whose word is conquest, and whose look's divine,
“ These seven imperial kingdoms now are thine.
“ See yon bright spheres thy beaming splendors blaze,
“ Oh ! deign to tell me, whence such glorious rays ? ”
The hero calls him nearer to his throne,
And tells him, wond'ring, whence his glories shone ;
Bids him the royalties of Zohak bring,
And all the treasures of the tyrant king ;

Bids

Bids him bring flowing bowls to raise the strain,
 With vocal music, and the mimic train;
 Bids him bring all the ministers of joy,
 And bids him for the feast his skill employ.
 "Bring too each man of merit to my sight,
 "This night shall jovial teem with new delight."
 Khundroo obey'd. The sumptuous table shines,
 Soft music warbles, and the gen'rous wines
 Enliven all. The chief approves the feast,
 Till the bright sun, arising from the east,
 Closes the scene; when, on an Arab steed
 Khundroo his master seeks, with winged speed,
 And reach'd his camp: the tale he thus relates:
 "I fear, great prince! the dark, the adverse fates,
 "Have clouded all your pow'rs; a foreign clime
 "Has given three warriors, martial and sublime.
 "Triumphant in your tow'rs the youngest sways,
 "And distant nations speak his martial praise.
 "In his strong arm a splendid sword he bears,
 "And on his brow thy rich tiara wears.

"Thy

“ Thy palace enters on a beauteous horse,

“ Two chiefs attend, resistless in their course.

“ He mounts thy throne, thy wife magicians slays,

“ Thy slaves are murder'd in one gen'ral blaze.”

This having said, the artful king rejoins,

“ 'Tis well ; regard not ; for no foe he shines.”

Khundroo replies ; “ No foe ! his fatal blade,

“ The image of a cow engrav'd, display'd :

“ Still can you deem him not an adverse foe ?

“ Let prudence dictate, and let caution flow.

“ No foe ! when joyful ! seated on thy throne,

“ Thy fame expires, thy sceptre overthrown !”

Then Zohak thus : “ This boist'rous clamour cease,

“ Some noble friend he comes ; the guest of peace.”

Still Khundroo spoke :—“ I saw, I heard this friend,

“ With your kind wives in gentle converse blend ;

“ With Gemshaid's sisters, gracious in each hand,

“ With looks enamour'd did the warrior stand.

“ On their soft necks he toys the night away,

“ Sports on their beauties with lascivious play.

“ These

“ These radiant beauties, with their scented hair,

“ No more will animate thy tender care.”

This picture mounted to the tyrant's brain ;

Like the fierce wolf he roar'd, when stung with pain.

To this he cry'd, “ Were death or hell divine,

“ Ye curs'd illusions ! blasted be the sign.”

Still raging more. “ Hence, Khundroo, from my fight ;

“ Fly from my presence, plung'd in endless night.”

Khundroo replies, “ Thy menaces I scorn ;

“ Soon wilt thou wander on the earth forlorn.

“ Thy sceptre falls ; while with disorder'd rage

“ You threaten me, what can thy grief assuage ?

“ Why not attentive to your own affairs ?

“ Thus, thus expos'd to never-ceasing cares.

“ 'Tis time for thought ; thy kingdom is no more ;

“ Thy foe is on thy throne ; thy glory's o'er.

“ Thy foe, who lifts the cow-grav'd sword on high ;

“ Your wives are captives, and your followers die.”

At this fierce Zohak rag'd with wild alarms,

Instant his dæmons buckle on their arms.

The

The fiercest steeds in shining trappings beam ;
 Enrag'd he marches, tortur'd by the dream.
 This reach'd the ear of Feredoon's domain ;
 His soldiers crow'd, and glitter on the plain.
 By various windings, and by ways unknown,
 He leads his army to the royal town.
 Each warrior mounts his steed, in arms elate,
 And waits the mandate, big with future fate.
 The name of Feredoon each breast resounds,
 His glory spreads to earth's remotest bounds.
 Zohak, the man of blood ! each gen'rous mind
 Glows to destroy, and thus relieve mankind.
 O'er all his cities frantic discord rose ;
 War, civil war, in ev'ry bosom glows.
 The missile weapons fly on ev'ry side,
 Chaos and night in fable triumph ride.
 Each warrior fled, the sage with horror flies,
 And seeks bright Feredoon with pensive sighs.
 Now Feredoon in arms resplendent shone,
 To Zohak marches, trembling for his throne.

Such various clamours rend the vaulted skies,
When fires unseen in rolling clouds arise.
On Feredoon each warlike chief attends,
Submissive waits, and to his mandate bends.
As hill on hill arising, ev'ry band
In order marches to the Persian strand.
“ Shall Zohak rule, defil'd with human gore,
“ While thousands lay unburied on the shore ?”
They spoke ; and vengeance fir'd the martial train,
While clouds of dust o'ershadow'd all the plain.
In vain the fell magician tries repose,
He seeks the palace t' avenge his woes.
In armour ev'ry limb the tyrant clad,
Conscious of guilt, and starting at his shade.
To the high palace in his hand he bore
Arabian bows, long steep'd in human gore.
The black-ey'd Arnēwas, by magic art,
Perceiv'd his downfall with exulting heart.
Her cheeks the picture of the ruddy morn ;
And jetty locks her lovely face adorn.

To Zohak now exulting she relates
 His falling greatness, and impending fates.
 Zohak perceiv'd 'twas heav'n that gave the blow,
 The earth in vengeance, and the Gods his foe.
 Zohak indignant to the court descends,
 His brain on fire, his Arab bow he rends.
 Sunk was his soul, the mansion of despair!
 And fate had doom'd him to corrosive care.
 On his right hand a scymitar he wore,
 (While all his soul contending passions tore)
 This he unsheath'd, to fix the sisters' doom,
 Lovely as fairies with celestial bloom.
 But wary guile his secret purpose bends,
 When with the shining blade the fiend descends.
 On wings of winds bright Feredoon appears,
 And seiz'd the weapon, while appall'd with fears,
 He struck th' usurper's head; the well-aim'd stroke
 Levell'd the tyrant, and his helmet broke.
 An angel's voice, who hov'ring in the air,
 Was heard in softest numbers to declare,

“ The fall of Zohak must suspended lay ;
“ His fate is destin'd for a future day.
“ Send him in chains to mountains and to caves,
“ Where he may howl with ignominious slaves,
“ Let all access to Zohak be deny'd,
“ That no kind converse may uphold his pride.”
The chief obeys, and with his victor hands,
With skins of tygers fix'd the tyrant's bands.
So strongly fetter'd, that to break the chain,
The reas'ning elephant wou'd strive in vain.
On the resplendent throne of burnish'd gold,
The chief rewards the good, and daunts the bold.
When thus : “ Ye gallant leaders, 'tis decreed,
“ Zohak enchain'd, is yet not doom'd to bleed ;
“ Carnage no more shall deluge ev'ry land,
“ But peace with olive branches grace the strand,
“ The tyrant fetter'd, you will bear no more
“ Your brilliant arms to steep in human gore.
“ On either side let savage war decline,
“ For many a warrior in his armies shine!

“ The

" The tyrant's chain'd, whose desolating arms
 " Struck the pale earth with terror and alarms.
 " Let the exulting foldier close his toil,
 " And seek repose within his native foil."
 The rich, the wise, unite in one applause,
 And yield allegiance to the hero's laws.
 He spoke again ; his looks with ardour glow'd,
 And gifts proportion'd to each rank bestow'd.
 " Let heartfelt praises to my God be giv'n,
 " I owe my eminence alone to heav'n ;
 " Who from the mountains led me to a throne,
 " And sav'd mankind from many a future groan.
 " To patronise each good, each just design,
 " To watch the public happiness, be mine.
 " By heav'n's award, with sceptres not elate,
 " I greatful rose to this distinguish'd state.
 " Through the whole realm attentive shall I go,
 " And law with justice leag'd my subjects show.
 " Not in vain-glorious sloth to pass my days ;
 " 'Tis worth and probity the king displays ;

" 'Tis

“ ’Tis this distinguishes mankind alone ;
“ It marks the monarch, and adorns the throne.”
The court, the warriors, join in loud acclaim,
And crown the patriot with the wreath of fame.
Around his palace all the cities crowd,
And, raptur’d, speak their gratitude aloud,
With Zohak’s name, still grating on the tongue,
Each echoing roof with execration rung.
Then thus : “ O ! Feredoon, in chains severe
“ Bind the fell tyrant, object of our fear.”
Each chief to Feredoon submissive bow’d,
And all the warriors to his standard crowd.
Zohak they bound, upon a palfrey plac’d,
And to the mountains led, a slave disgrac’d.
Such is the tyrant’s fate ; the meteors blaze,
And such the moral turpitude displays.
The chief commands, at Sherkan, in a cave
They fix’d the tyrant as the meanest slave.
A guardian angel speaks, unseen in air,
“ To Dumavend the dire magician bear.”

“ Where

“ Where no allies, and where no kindred race,
“ Can yield him aid, or soften his disgrace.
“ This heav’n permits !” Now far from human found,
In Dumavend’s lone cave the tyrant’s bound.
Many a year elaps’d, he there remains
In the lone cave, and fix’d in iron chains.
His senses gone, he now more wretched lies,
Suspended in the air ! his groans, and sighs,
The only sounds he hears ; from his sad heart
Large drops of blood in bitt’rest anguish start.
In this short transient scene let virtue guide ;
Be worth thy patron, excellence thy pride.
Let honour lead thee, or let vice prevail,
The hand of death will hold an equal scale.
From goodness only happiness will rise,
Vain all the splendor ’neath the azure skies.
Nor lofty palaces, nor costly state,
Nor burnish’d gold, will change the word of fate.
Be this for ever grav’d upon your breast,
“ ’Tis excellence alone can give you rest.”

Bright

Bright Feredoon, an angel sprung from heav'n,
Be all thy actions thus to virtue giv'n,
And thou art Feredoon. At vice he aim'd;
Before him, Zohak ev'ry worth disclaim'd;
In wisdom and improvement of mankind,
In acts benevolent, great Gemsheid shin'd;
Hoshung aveng'd his fire; in pious strains
He taught the world, and fertiliz'd the plains;
Brave Kiûmers the dæmon race expell'd,
And the whole world in just obedience held.
Oh! world what art thou? a fallacious scene,
You nourish to destroy, the source of spleen!
See Feredoon with ev'ry virtue glow,
As humble as the tyrant he laid low.
Five hundred years he rul'd with gentle sway,
Not all his virtues shelter from decay.
The world still flourishes; another king
Succeeds, and basks awhile in life's short spring.
To the lone grave a mighty name he bore,
And left pale grief lamenting on the shore.

Bright

Such

Such is the fate of man ; the shepherd swain,
The sceptred monarch with his splendid train,
By death are equal : in his glorious time,
No chief but Feredoon appear'd sublime.

VOL. I.

A a

THE

THE ARGUMENT.

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T H E

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

B O O K V.

THE throne Kianian, Feredoon prepares,

And Iran teems no more with anxious cares ;

Bright-ey'd religion elevates her head ;

Sereneft influence ev'ry planet fhed :

Far from the throne each vice the chief expels ;

There excellence and radiant virtue dwells.

A house he builds, and calls the comic train,
Here the sage mingle with instructive strain.
From the bright cup they drink inspiring wines,
Studded with gems, the cup resplendent shines.
The world reviv'd. A monarch born to fame
Joys ev'ry heart, each infant lisps his name.
So when the rising moon spreads round her light,
Each swain with rapture views the lamp of night.
Bright fires he kindles, ev'ry breast illumines ;
Saffron and amber yield their rich perfumes.
Yon splendid orb he teaches to adore,
Peace and benevolence his chosen lore.
As the bright sun around his orbit moves,
And the pale moon within her circle roves,
So life goes on ; then mourn not transient fate,
Five hundred years this monarch rul'd in state,
Yet death his glory clos'd ; though high in pow'r,
Though fortune smil'd on each propitiate hour,
He died like thee ; let not ambition fire,
Nor the vain trappings of the world desire.

Ah !

Ah ! let not grief, my son ! disturb your breast,
Short is our period, ne'er completely blest !
Feranuk cou'd not know a future king,
A future hero, from her loins wou'd spring.
The throne was vacant from the tyrant's crimes,
The stars indignant fix the fated times.
Fame spreads the triumph to Feranuk's ear,
A parent's transports in her looks appear.
First she abluv'd, and with devotion high,
Her grateful accents blest the fav'ring sky.
Low to the ground she bends her aged head,
And thanks her Maker that the tyrant's dead.
A place to each attendant she assign'd,
And secret presents please each grateful mind.
Seven days to fair benevolence was giv'n,
No more the Derweish supplicates his heav'n.
Now festal pleasures reign, and purest gold
Enrich her friends, and animate the old.
To celebrate her son's triumphant rise,
Gifts she bestows, and ev'ry want supplies.

Embroider'd

Embroider'd cloths, and gems of brightest hue,
With rapid steeds, spears, helmets, armour too,
Turbans and belts, she liberally gave;
Her mind to avarice no sordid slave;
Camels she loaded with her choicest store:
To her fond son, with transport flowing o'er,
The gifts she sends; her heart without disguise
To heav'n she bends, and rais'd her aged eyes.
With all the glories of her son inspir'd,
She thus exclaim'd: "By bright religion fir'd,
"Oh! king, of heav'n belov'd, thy God adore;
"Thy thanks for his transcendent goodness pour.
"Oh! may each rising sun thy fame increase,
"And may thy foe ne'er know the joys of peace."
When Feredoon receiv'd the splendid stores,
A thousand blessings on his mother pours.
Soon as the gifts to his bright court were known,
The chiefs, the warriors, crowd before his throne.
Around the steps the royal gifts they laid,
And thronging crowds their heartfelt joy display'd.

One general exclamation rends the air,

“ The crown for ever ! and for ever wear !

“ For ever may thy glorious sceptre shine ;

“ (They bow’d devoutly to the Pow’rs Divine)

“ Oh ! may long life, long health, thy reign attend ;

“ Peace to thy subjects ; to mankind a friend.”

The hero now inspects his blest’d domains,

With patriot eye he views his fertile plains ;

Where vice appears, by salutary laws

He checks its progress, and explores the cause.

Where villages deserted mould’ring lay,

By equal rules he shelters from decay.

On lofty mountains flow’ry shrubs are seen,

On earth is pictur’d the Elyzian scene.

From Zabul to Jehmeen the hero goes,

(This famous city, Tus, the modern knows)

Five years elaps’d, three sons the chief delight,

Resembling Feredoon, divinely bright.

The elder two, from beauteous Sheirnaz sprung,

And one from Arnewas, sublimely young.

No

No name he gave them ; with their royal fire
 On elephants they rode ; his deeds inspire.
 Their mind he cultur'd with each virtuous lore,
 And led their thoughts to glory's sacred shore,
 To deeds of eminence ; of warlike fame.
 A chief he calls, and Jundal was his name ;
 Fidelity and honour fill'd his breast,
 To him the hero thus his thoughts address :
 " Search through the globe three maids of royal race,
 " Of gentle manners, and of polish'd grace,
 " Sprung from one father's and one mother's loins,
 " As fairies lovely, and whose birth combines
 " Exalted state and elegant desires,
 " Worthy my sons, and pleasing to their fires.
 " Be silent on their names ; let there appear
 " Such epithets as please a parent's ear."
 Jundal obedient bow'd ; his gallant breast,
 Renown'd for wisdom, excellence confess.
 Much he revolves, for on his tuneful tongue
 The grace of flowing elocution hung.

His

His actions, truth and blooming honour guide,
His glory, virtue ; equity his pride.
From Iran now he travers'd many a plain,
Where royal chieftains, and where monarchs reign ;
Through ev'ry realm where fame directs his way,
Where royal fires with lovely daughters fway ;
The character and beauty of each maid,
In private questions, in the secret shade ;
Not where small chiefs o'er feudal bands preside,
Whose daughters are ill suited for a bride
Of such superior birth. He reach'd the plains,
Where Cyrus o'er Arabia Felix reigns ;
Whose three fair daughters fame had blazon'd far,
Renown'd for beauty, each a radiant star,
As the gay pheasant seeks the roseate bow'rs,
He fought these maidens, these all-blooming flow'rs.
He waits on Cyrus, then submissive bow'd,
And speaks his praises eloquently loud.
The king of Yemen to his speech replies,
“ Your presence charms ; say, favour'd by the skies !

“ What message bear you, or what mandate bring ? ”

“ Order'd by whom ? from what imperial king ? ”

Jundal thus spoke : “ Let peace your bosom charm,

“ I come, great prince, no envoy of alarm ;

“ No sumptuous trains attend my humble state,

“ I come from Iran to this royal gate.

“ Not the fair tulip with more softness blows,

“ Or sweeter fragrance breathes the blushing rose,

“ Than the fair message that I friendly bring

“ From Feredoon the just, the mighty king.

“ Your question answer'd. His benignant strains

“ Teem with high honours for your blest domains.

“ Such strains as eminence alone bestows,

“ When royal favour on inferiors flows.

“ Say to the king of Yemen, May no care

“ Disturb his mind ; may fate, serenely fair,

“ Smile on his days, may joy his hours illumine,

“ And musk breathe round him a divine perfume ;

“ May conquest crown him, and the richest store

“ Of golden mines their plenteous tribute pour.

“ Mark

- “ Mark well ! O monarch of Arabia's plain !
“ What stars propitiate bless thy glorious reign ?
“ Say, can a pleasure reach the human breast
“ Equal to that which makes your children blest ?
“ Ah ! how more valued than all other ties,
“ Or the whole range of life's dependencies.
“ For his three sons, I search three beauteous maids,
“ Of royal race, within thy sacred shades.
“ When you shall view these fav'rites of the skies,
“ Bright joy will sparkle in your royal eyes.
“ By me the victor speaks, who, till this time,
“ No offer ever made ; to pow'r sublime
“ Solely the monarch speaks ; the wise alone
“ Strive to conciliate subjects to the throne.
“ When kings inactive lose their martial fires,
“ Their subjects, scorning, brave their king's desires.
“ My royal lord adorns his fertile plains,
“ And princely treasures fill his blest domains.
“ While the pale moon her monthly circuit runs,
“ I scarce could speak the praises of his sons.

- “ So blest with wealth, encircled round with pow’rs,
“ Obedience, and command attend their hours.
“ Give your fair daughters to this royal race,
“ Fame told the story of their blooming grace.
“ I came to thee ; fame spoke them heav’nly bright ;
“ As yet secluded from the stranger’s fight.
“ When first I heard the maidens’ youthful charms,
“ My faithful breast serene’d pleasure warms.
“ No name the victor to his sons has giv’n,
“ I have not blaz’d their excellence from heav’n.
“ From your fair daughters let their names be rais’d ;
“ Your royal actions by the world are prais’d.
“ Let these bright jewels in connubial rites,
“ Be join’d for ever, source of gay delights !
“ These fair sequester’d, and these kingly boys,
“ Thus join’d, will animate a parent’s joys.
“ Let the rich spoufals with such lustre beam,
“ That eloquence may sink beneath the theme.
“ Such is the monarch’s message, which I bring ;
“ Say, what reply will please Arabia’s king ?”

Cyrus

Cyrus attentive heard ; within his breast

Various emotions rise, though now suppressed.

So the gay hues which deck the budding flow'rs,

Are sunk and wither'd by destructive show'rs.

“ Ah ! shou'd they quit me, in whose fight alone

“ I breathe with pleasure, who illumine my throne,

“ The eve of life will clouded pass away ;

“ And yet what answer must my words convey ?

“ Reflection aid me ; let the sage advise ;

“ Such weighty business claims no prompt replies.

“ My every thought my darling daughters knew,

“ And my whole soul was open'd to their view.”

To Jundal first the chief a house assigns ;

Revolving in his mind the various lines

His conduct might pursue. He now retires ;

His court dismiss'd ; the presence he requires

Of faithful chiefs, and those whom wisdom grace ;

The first in duty, as the first in place.

These he address'd ; “ With three fair daughters blest,

“ Whose fond endearments charm my parent breast.

“ Lights

- “ Lights of my soul ! these Feredoon demands ;
“ An envoy comes to snatch them from my hands.
“ He lays the snare ; ye sage advisers ! tell
“ What just reflections in your bosoms dwell.
“ This envoy has declar’d, three royal boys,
“ Resplendent as the sun, his care employs.
“ For these three sons of Feredoon the great,
“ My daughters he demands in nuptial state.
“ Should I assent, my heart will ne’er approve,
“ Falsehood shou’d never with a monarch move.
“ Should I assent, and yield to his desires,
“ My breast will burn with a volcano’s fires.
“ Shame glows within me that he thus demands,
“ Unseen ! and unapprov’d ! my daughters’ hands.
“ Shou’d I refuse, resistless are his pow’rs ;
“ Great is the monarch, num’rous are his tow’rs.
“ ’Tis perilous to provoke such mighty state,
“ Who has not heard the tale of Zohak’s fate ?
“ These the reflections of my mind you know ;
“ Let now the dictates of your judgements flow.”

The

The chiefs, the sages, with one voice reply,

“ We see no tempest, or no peril nigh.

“ Though Feredoon is mighty, we are thine;

“ Let him approach, thy chiefs in armour shine,

“ Devoted to thy will; in war's alarms

“ We'll meet the foe, and dare his conq'ring arms.

“ Dext'rous to manage the impetuous horse,

“ To dart the jav'lin with unerring force,

“ To plant the dagger in the hostile foe,

“ Till fanguine streams tinge all the ground below:

“ To guide the fury of embattl'd hosts,

“ The victor's glory, and the warrior's boasts:

“ Till e'en the winds blow with such rustling sounds,

“ As reeds by tempests mov'd in marshy grounds.

“ Does such affection for thy daughters glow;

“ Send no reply, but brilliant gifts bestow.

“ Yet if thy soul to varying thoughts inclines,

“ And terror awes, assent to his designs.”

This answer heard, unknowing what to do,

What plan to follow, what advice pursue,

He

He calls the envoy, and attunes his strain
To softest eloquence. “ A king I reign,
“ Far, far inferior to thy royal lord,
“ I bow obedient, to his wish accord.
“ Tell him, the greatness of his gallant sons,
“ His glory, like the splendid planet runs.
“ And tell him I assent; yet must require
“ My daughters to agree to his desire.
“ Should he unwilling take them from my arms,
“ My throne, my sceptre, lose their boasted charms.
“ Shou’d from my view my much-lov’d daughters go,
“ For ever will my sighs, my sorrows flow.
“ Shou’d he command, resistance is in vain.
“ And shou’d he force them from their native plain,
“ Where shall I see his boasted sons, and where
“ The regal lustre, or the lover’s care.
“ Oh ! let them come, and glad a parent’s sight;
“ Here let them solemnize the nuptial rite.
“ This gloom will brighten when their presence charms
“ My raptur’d heart, encircl’d in their arms.

“ Then

“ Then shall I view the lustre of their birth,
“ Their gallant actions, their distinguish'd worth.
“ Then by the institutes we here obey,
“ I give my daughters to his sons away.
“ Then shall I see their heart-felt goodness shine,
“ And feel their gen'rous arms encircling mine.
“ Not long will I thy monarch's sons detain,
“ But soon restore them to their native plain.”
Thus having said, the envoy kiss'd his throne,
Struck with his wisdom that superior shone.
Now Jundal hastens to his native soil,
And tells the tale which crown'd the faithful toil;
To Feredoon relates the chief's reply,
How grac'd with goodness by the fav'ring sky.
How much he wish'd the heroes to behold,
And all his converse with the monarch told.
“ The king of Yemen shines in virtuous fame,
“ Just are his thoughts, and Cyrus is his name.
“ Three virgin daughters, each a brilliant gem,
“ Resplendent glitter from this royal stem.

- “ He has no son ; these daughters are his heirs ;
 “ The spring of all his joys, and all his cares.
 “ Shou’d your blest sons possess their heav’nly charms,
 “ Think they are angels in their youthful arms.
 “ For them, these maids in marriage I require ;
 “ I prais’d your glories, and their martial fire.
 “ It only now requires your leave to go :
 “ ’Tis yours, my youthful lords, your skill to show ;
 “ ’Tis yours to show to the admiring earth
 “ Justness in thought, and excellence in worth.
 “ With fix’d attention to his speech attend,
 “ Sense and politeness in your answers blend.
 “ Princes shou’d ever eloquently shine,
 “ And acts becoming of their royal line.
 “ ’Tis dignity of air, unmix’d with pride,
 “ With truth and wisdom for a constant guide,
 “ That greatness marks. Oh ! listen to my strain !
 “ Act as I tell, and glory marks your reign.
 “ The king of Yemen rules with sapient sway,
 “ And few such sense or excellence display.

- “ In royal wealth, his state, his subjects roll,
 “ And warlike armies bow to his control.
 “ Enthron’d on high, fair wisdom marks his state :
 “ Be all thy actions eminently great !
 “ ’Tis this will give a lustre to your youth,
 “ And show the sons of dignity and truth.
 “ For you the lord of Yemen lays the snares ;
 “ To meet you on the way his court prepares.
 “ The beauteous maids, the daughters of the king,
 “ As a fair garden in the smiling spring
 “ Breathing divine perfumes, by beauty drest,
 “ With jewels splendid, and embroider’d vest,
 “ Will lead you to the throne. The sun’s bright rays
 “ Do not with dazzling radiance higher blaze.
 “ Not with more grace the cypress waves serene,
 “ Each seems the same ; no difference to be seen.
 “ Yon splendid orb, the world’s admiring theme,
 “ These fair eclipse, with their transcendent beam.
 “ The younger first will lead the youthful train ;
 “ The second next will decorate the plain ;

“ The eldest near the younger son will place

“ Her blooming form ; the youngest maid will grace

“ The elder youth ; the second maid will smile

“ Near to the second youth ; this artful guile

“ Well recollect ; from you they will demand

“ Which is the eldest of the beauteous band :

“ And which the younger, which the second maid ?

“ Remember well ; let not thy glories fade.”

The gallant boys, as Feredoon approves,

March eager on to view their promis'd loves.

Fair wisdom triumph'd in their youthful breast,

Full of the counsel Jundal had address.

His clear instructions Feredoon had giv'n,

And with them sent each sage approv'd by heav'n.

All the bright warriors of their father's train,

And well-arm'd troops resplendent on the plain

Attend his sons. This Cyrus heard elate,

And sends an army with a monarch's state

To meet the royal boys ; his nearest friends,

The statesmen, and the faithful guard he sends ;

To

To Yemen now exulting on they came,
The city all rush'd forth to view what fame
Had blazon'd high ; the richest gems were spread,
Saffron and sweet perfumes their odour shed.
Before their steps the throng gay flow'rets strow'd,
And ev'ry gale with warbling music flow'd.
The brightest colours deck the neighing steed,
And show'rs of gold their eager steps impede.
Turkish brocades, and trays of pearl invite,
And brilliant jewels dazzle all the sight.
They now alight. The sun now darts his ray ;
All nature smiles to view the rising day.
Yet Cyrus does not meet the royal boys,
But sends the beauteous daughters of his joys.
So lovely they approach, their sparkling sight
Charms each beholder : thus the god of light,
Breaking through darkness with his morning beams,
Sheds his mild influence o'er the lucid streams,
O'er ev'ry hill dispels the gloom away,
And breaks, resistless ! with refulgent day.

The

The fair Kianian maids as night serene,
When the full moon, unclouded, gilds the scene.
As Jundal had foretold, each beauteous maid
By one bright youth her dazzling form display'd.
“ Say which (the elder cries) is first in years,
“ And which the second, which the last appears.”
As by their fire instructed they reply'd ;
Vain prov'd the snare, in vain the monarch try'd
The princes to deceive, and soon he found,
From the deceit no honour wou'd redound.
In his false look feign'd happiness appears,
He match'd the pairs conforming to their years.
This point adjusted, ev'ry heart was gay ;
The maidens, lovely as the morn of May,
Conscious of guilt, of the propos'd disgrace,
With deep suffusions paint their blooming face.
Each maid retires, with fault'ring accents flow,
Asham'd and sad, their conscious blushes glow.
The king of Yemen bids the circling bowl
Bright joy irradiate in each jovial soul,

Bids

Bids the gay minstrel tune his liveliest note ;
 Soft music warbles through each vocal throat ;
 Till night the flowing cup, the sparkling wine,
 Warms the gay guests : the princes still decline
 The foaming bowl ; they know the sparkling juice
 Nor chearful rest, nor wisdom wou'd produce.
 The king commands to sprinkle o'er the room
 The roseate essence, and each sweet perfume.
 Soft couches he prepares, the carpet strows,
 With scented flow'rets, and the blushing rose ;
 And the young princes seek their soft repose.
 The king of Yemen, vers'd in magic skill,
 Consults what best will execute his will.
 The princes slept ; when from his secret shade
 Th' Arabian came, and tries his magic aid.
 Th' incantation o'er, a furious storm
 And hostile winds the face of night deform,
 That fatal it might prove ; one heap of snow,
 And winds with pestilential vapours blow.

So the diamond's beam with equal lustre lies ;

So cold, not e'en the bird of night would fly ;
The youths by counter-acting magic try
T' avert the danger of the threat'ning air,
By courage, wisdom, and religious pray'r.
At early dawn he visits his gay guests,
Vainly surmising that the noxious pests
Ere this, had tainted the fair spring of life,
The victims sad of elemental strife !
This hope had pictur'd, and this fate denies,
To snatch his daughters from the nuptial ties.
But when he view'd them on the chairs of state,
Thrones that he made, all blooming and elate,
He found his magic artifice was vain ;
Health smil'd upon them, and unmix'd with pain.
In his high hall he summon'd all his peers,
Renown'd for courage ; all the reverend seers,
His golden treasures and the diamond's blaze,
(Long kept from mortal ken) the king displays.
Fair came his lovely daughters, in whose eyes
The diamond's beam with equal lustre lies ;

On

On whose vermilion face the blooming flow'rs
 Of paradise display their roseate pow'rs ;
 Such shapes unequall'd, such surpassing lore,
 As grac'd these stars, the world ne'er knew before.
 Care was a stranger to their heav'nly breast ;
 To these he, fighting, gave the golden chest.
 Great preparations for the nuptials made ;
 Though sorrow tore his mind, by fear dismay'd.
 Pensive he takes the royal princes' hands,
 And joins his daughters' in connubial bands.
 But still his mind, unsettled, fears that fate
 And Feredoon would hurt his future state.
 " How keep my daughters ! shou'd his fury rise,
 " His arms through Yemen snatch the valued prize.
 " Death then my fix'd resolve ; the splendid vein
 " Of royal blood will grace a foreign reign.
 " May peace and joy attend my daughters' breast."
 'Twas thus he ponder'd, then the court address :
 " Know that these beauteous mirrors of the earth,
 " These starlike maidens of illustrious birth,

“ By my own laws to these bright youths I give,
“ Dear as the soul by whose fair spring we live.
“ For their departure now the gifts prepare ;”
His bosom torn by sorrow and despair.
All Yemen shone in one resplendent blaze,
The costly diamond beams with clearest rays.
On the vast elephant the splendid chair,
With gems adorn’d, high glitters in the air.
The canopy displays the rich brocade ;
Of pendant jewels were the fringes made ;
The hardy camels bear the royal gift,
And golden saddles ornament the swift,
The neighing steed. They quit th’ Arabian plain ;
Love warms their heart, and animates the strain ;
To Feredoon the winged voice of fame
Proclaims their near approach, and heighten’d name.
To view the conduct of his sons unseen,
To mark their judgement, furious or serene,
He quits his camp, assumes a dragon’s form,
More fierce than tygers when enrag’d they storm ;

Or

Or when the lion howls with furious ire,
And fancy pictures globes of flaming fire.
When Feredoon approach'd the mighty train,
As numerous mountains nodding o'er the plain,
He spurr'd impetuous on his foaming steed,
And shouting crowds all wonder at his speed.
The elder prince thus questions: " Brave and wise,
" Why dragon-like appear in hostile guise?
" Fair wisdom dictates, not with furious might,
" Thus unprovok'd, to dare the dubious fight."
Quick to the second youth the hero turns;
He draws the bow; his breast with passion burns.
" A lion thou, then feed on brutal prey;
" A warrior thou, I dare thee to the fray.
" Think not in vain from warriors born to fly;
" From war you must inevitably die."
The younger prince with voice indignant brave,
Thus speaks, as tempests howling o'er the wave:
" Hence, for I deem thee warlike among men,
" Yet, dare not to approach the lion's den."

“ If the high fame of Feredoon divine,
“ Has reach’d thy ear, behold his royal line.
“ Approach not as a foe, for in our breast
“ Bright courage reigns ; but if no motive preft
“ This rude encounter, and the chief you know,
“ Hence from the camp, and fear the godlike foe.”

Pleas’d with their courage, now the king retires,
And soon returns, (as fondest love inspires)
In his own shape, and with his royal band,
The cow-grav’d sword high glitt’ring in his hand.
On kingly elephants his nobles shine,
And the whole world esteem’d him as divine.
When the bright youths their king and father meet,
Quick they alight and kiss his royal feet :
He stopp’d his elephant ; with fond embrace,
Hung o’er his sons, and nam’d his royal race.
With pious praise to God he rais’d his eyes,
And saw the future mandate of the skies.
On chairs of state the gallant youths he plac’d,
And thus address’d : “ The dragon that you fac’d,

“ Was

" Was Feredoon, with fond affection warm,
 " To view thy actions in a varying form ;
 " Convinc'd of all thy worth ; and now a name
 " Shall grace thy actions equal to thy fame."

The first he Sulm calls : " Oh ! may each deed,
 " Tow'ring aloft through future life succeed ;
 " When as a dragon to your camp I came,
 " Just your reply, and worthy of your fame ;
 " It charm'd my soul." To the next youth he turns,
 Whose bosom with transcendent courage burns.

" The brave man does not fear the lion's rage,
 " But acts with courage which no fears engage ;
 " Quick as impetuous fire he darts along,
 " And eminently shines above the throng."

Him Toor he call'd. " As lions brave and strong,
 " Whom fiercest elephants wou'd dare in vain ;
 " Thy courage merits a resplendent reign ;
 " The timid monarch rules a servile train."

Next to the youngest, in whose temp'rate mind
 Courage by white rob'd wisdom was refin'd :

" Thou

" Thou in whom fire and mildness both unite,
 " Coolness in thought, and vigour in the fight,
 " In whose reply much sense and courage shone,
 " Though prudent, young; deserving of a throne;
 " Let Eritch be thy name. Oh! may thy arms
 " Triumphant rise, and shine through war's alarms.
 " Now let your nuptials raise the glorious strain,
 " Pleas'd as when fish along the liquid main
 " Sport in the stream, as night assumes her reign.
 " Now let these maidens ornament my theme,
 " These fairy beauties, that conspicuous beam.
 " The wife of Sulm, Arzu be her name;
 " Of Toor's, be Mah; and Eritch lovely dame
 " Be Behy nam'd." The record of our fate
 He call'd, where fam'd astronomers relate
 Under what sign we're born; their future state
 The father shows; to Sulm's fight appears
 The planet Jupiter, and o'er his years
 Bright Sagittarius rules; the sun's bright rays
 O'er warlike Toor his fervent beam displays.

The

The changing moon o'er Eritch's fate presides,
Marks all his hopes, and on his doom decides;
That Eritch wou'd in battle greatly die,
The king perceiving, utters many a sigh;
His anxious soul is pictur'd in his eye.
Eritch beheld his future fortunes low'r,
That stars unfav'ring mark'd his destin'd hour.
The monarch views the map; there warlike Greece,
Eran and Turkistan his pow'rs confess.
To Sulm now fair Greece the monarch gave,
Turan to Toor, renown'd for heroes brave.
Sulm prepares the warlike chosen band,
Pleas'd with his lot, he seeks the Grecian strand.
The king for Toor commands a martial train,
Who heads his army, and begins his reign
With salutary rules; the nobles bring
The richest gems; his name the Lion-king.
Now Eritch came: Eran to him was giv'n,
The noblest land beneath the vaulted heav'n.

Fam'd

Fam'd for its palaces, and royal seats,
 The residence of kings, and blest retreats:
 Its thrones of ebony; its sceptres shine;
 And Eritch nam'd it, Eran the divine!
 For many a year fair peace attends their pow'r;
 Time in her womb conceals the future hour.

THE

THE ARGUMENT

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

BOOK VI.

Vol. I.

E e

THE

THE ARGUMENT.

THE machinations of Sulm to induce the concurrence of Toor in a rebellion against the king—The aversion of Toor to take arms against his father—He at last accedes, on an interview with Sulm—An envoy is ordered to the court of Feredoon with reproaches—The envoy arriving is alarmed at the magnificence of Feredoon—Relates his message—The king's reply—Eritch offers to go to Sulm and Toor to conciliate the dispute—Feredoon endeavours to dissuade—Assents to his departure—His brothers meet him under a semblance of friendship—The murder of Eritch—His head is brought to Feredoon—The lamentation of the old king—The birth of a daughter of Eritch by Mahafreed—Her marriage with Poshung, the king's nephew—The birth of Munochere—Being able to carry arms, Feredoon orders the chief of the empire to assemble his forces—The alarms of Sulm and Toor, they send an envoy to the king, expressing their penitence—He rejects their petition—The

—The envoy returns; describes the splendor and military array of the troops of Feredoon—Announces the vengeance of the Iranian princes—They collect an army—The forces of Feredoon march—The instructions of the king to Munochere—The armies approach—Sulm sends a taunting message to Munochere—His reply—Cyrus, the Arabian chief, addresses the army—At daybreak they engage—Description of the battle—The battle undetermined—Sulm and Toor, after a consultation, resolve to attack the Iranians in the night—The spies of Munochere inform him of their design—Karun watches their motions—Sulm and Toor begin their onset—Find the enemy prepared—Their astonishment—Endeavour to fly—Munochere pursues—Kills Toor—Returns to his tents—Writes to Feredoon an account of the action, and sends the head of Toor—Sulm, alarmed, retreats to a fort—Karun requests to lead a chosen band against him—With the ring of Toor as a passport he proposes to gain admittance into the fort—Succeeds, and places the ban of Gao in the fort in the night—Sherovy, a chief in the army of Munochere, on the signal, marches to the gates, and takes it—Karun, returning to the young prince, finds that Kakou, a grand-

son of Zohak, was approaching—The armies engage—Munochere kills Kakou in a single combat—The death of Sulm—His army submits to Munochere—Who, returning to Iran, is met by the old king—The coronation of Munochere—Feredoon prepares for death—His last reflections, and death—The grief of his subjects—The author's sentiments on the instability of human life.

THE

T H E

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

B O O K VI.

NOW Feredoon grows old; the silver hairs
 Are oft forerunners of approaching cares!
 No more the garden of the verdant spring
 Smiles on the drooping winter of the king.
 His eve of life beheld a painful scene;
 Chang'd were his sons; no more the mind serene

Directs

Directs their acts ; ambition, fatal pow'r !

O'er Sulm see with venom'd fury low'r.

Much he revolves : " The realms my father gave

" Ill suit my birth ; were Erich's soul more brave,

" His mind more lofty, or his deeds more bold,

" That he shou'd place him on his throne of gold ? "

Rage tore his heart : an envoy he prepares,

To tell Turania's king his new-born cares.

" This message bear to Toor," proud Sulm cries,

" Long may he live a fav'rite of the skies.

" Tell him my cause of grief," (for Toor's high breast

No thought had yet but excellence possess.)

" Tell him his realms inferior kings might suit ;

" Wou'd tow'ring trees bow to the slender shoot ?

" And shou'd he deem his pow'r and reign sublime,

" Let higher thoughts, and aggrandizing time,

" Lift him superior ; for whoever saw

" Two sons of royalty, by partial law,

" Divested of their rights ? (a younger son

" The fond affection of a parent won,

" And

“ And snatch’d our birth-right.) Is this son more brave,
“ More wise, to whom the king our empire gave ?
“ My throne I quit, the bauble I restore,
“ Resign thy sceptre ; it can please no more.
“ Let us in union act ; our partial fire
“ Unwisely judg’d ; for me, I burn with ire.
“ To Eritch did he give the chosen land,
“ Immortal Eran, and her godlike band :
“ The Grecian reign bestow’d on me alone,
“ To you he only gave Turania’s throne.
“ Why not to us was royal Eran giv’n ?
“ The kingdom I abhor to which I’m driv’n !”
He for his envoy chose a rapid steed,
Who seeks Turania’s king with winged speed.
Arriv’d, the message of his king declares,
Which fills the mind of Toor with anxious cares.
Provok’d he heard the disobedient strain,
As when the angry lion tears the plain :
Thus he replies : “ Such thoughts disgrace the king,
“ And dire effects from such illusions spring.

“ In

“ In youth these realms we took with one accord ;

“ The gen’rous gift of our imperial lord.

“ The tree he rais’d with fond paternal care ;

“ How dare we plunge our father in despair !

“ In deep oblivion let rebellion rest,

“ Lest fame shou’d speak them to our father’s breast.”

The envoy quick returns. Now Sulm chose

A diff’rent envoy, in whose bosom flows

Persuasive eloquence ; and bids him try

Delusive words, and artful flattery.

Say thus : “ O ! monarch, in whom still are join’d

“ The hero’s glory and a gen’rous mind ;

“ Whene’er the soul is eager for the fight,

“ No rest from labour can the bold delight ;

“ Such high affairs by indolence decay,

“ And, once begun, admit of no delay.”

Toor heard attentive. Both the brothers meet ;

All knew the motive ; there was no retreat.

The artful converse and the specious strain

Of wily Sulm works through ev’ry vein

Of Toor, and fills with agonising cares.
 They chose a warrior, fam'd in state affairs,
 To guide and to consult. In secret shades
 Much they debate, and try the various aids
 That may ensure success; then Sulm spoke,
 And, as his dire intentions first he broke,
 In his fierce eye appears no conscious shame;
 He, impious! execrates his father's name!
 He spoke the envoy: "To the king repair,
 "To Feredoon, on wings as swift as air;
 "Let no delay thy embassy impede,
 "To his high court urge on with rapid speed;
 "There from his sons the wonted homage pay,
 "And thus address him in the face of day:
 "Say, that in earth as well as heav'n supreme,
 "The will of God shou'd be the constant theme.
 "Gay hope presiding in each fervent breast,
 "Paints blissful youth, and age serenely blest.
 "But when the summer of our life is o'er,
 "And winter chills, the spring returns no more.

- “ If wrong thy actions in this mortal sphere,
 “ In other worlds, a just resentment fear.
 “ This world the God of all on thee bestows,
 “ All the fun fees, and all that nature knows.
 “ Thy will a law; while heav’n’s divine commands
 “ Pass all neglected through thy aged hands.
 “ To deeds of ill thy breast attends alone;
 “ Partial divider of thy splendid throne !
 “ Three valiant sons were thine ; the younger boy
 “ Alone resplendent, source of all thy joy !
 “ What eminence superior does he claim ?
 “ All justly equal in the list of fame.
 “ Realms insignificant to one you gave ;
 “ To one a humble reign, though both were brave ;
 “ Your own domains, and the Kianian pow’r,
 “ On the young boy with partial hand you shew’r.
 “ Ours is the birth-right ; and our actions shine
 “ With equal lustre ; and of equal line.
 “ May deeds thus partial meet deserving fate,
 “ And war’s alarms shake all th’ Eranian state ;

“ To

“ To Erich give the globe ; let us be poor ;
 “ The humbled Sulm, and neglected Toor.
 “ Turan and China, with the warlike Greece,
 “ Will come in thunder, and by force will seize
 “ The throne of Erich.” When these fierce commands
 The envoy heard, he seeks Irania’s lands.
 He mounts his rapid steed ; as swift as fire
 When driv’n by winds, he fought their kingly fire.
 Arriv’d, he views, amaz’d ! his mighty pow’rs,
 His dome resplendent, and imperial tow’rs
 Soaring above the clouds ; as mountains high,
 With stately eminence they reach the sky.
 The splendid court with nobles circled round,
 The interior room with wisdom’s sacred found
 And Feredoon were full. On one hand, bound,
 The kingly lion, and the tyger bold ;
 And on the other, elephants behold,
 Train’d for the fight ; his warriors’ manly strains
 Equal the lion’s roar ; such martial trains,

Such tow'ring palaces, the work of heav'n,
For Feredoon beneficently giv'n.

To him his warriors spoke; "Illustrious fire,
"An envoy comes, a chief of martial fire."——

"Let him approach!" the king august replies.

Soon as the envoy saw his piercing eyes,

His royal figure, splendid as the light,

Tall and erect, and venerably white,

His silver hairs, his manners gently mild;

(For on his face benignant greatness smil'd,)

His speech mellifluent; to the earth he bows,

And pours before the throne his artful vows.

The chief a feat commands; with joy elate,

Much of his warlike sons, and of their state,

The monarch questions: "By fatigue o'erprest,

"Thy journey tedious may demand some rest."

Thus having said, the envoy quick replies,

(Low was his voice, and downcast were his eyes,)

"Fair life smiles on thee with perpetual spring,

"Oh! may thy throne ne'er grace another king.

"The

“ The globe is thine, from patriot labours thine,

“ Peace to thy subjects, glory of thy line!

“ Behold in me, a poor and abject slave,

“ The servant of a king, on fortune's wave

“ Thrown prostrate : for a message bold I bring ;

“ Such the indignant mandate of my king.

“ Ah ! let no censure on the servant fall,

“ If you command, I will unfold it all.

“ The message, penn'd by folly, I will speak,

“ Base are the sentiments, the language weak.”

The king commands ; his order he relates,

And, trembling for himself, the answer waits.

When the king heard, astonish'd and amaz'd,

His eyes to heav'n the pious monarch rais'd ;

“ Fear not,” he said, “ brave man ! not thine the blame ;

“ The boldness theirs, and theirs the finish'd shame.

“ Such the decree of fate, I knew before ;

“ Go tell these fools to cease their impious roar.

“ Go tell these dæmons, where the furies reign,

“ Are these the thoughts, is this the gen'rous strain,

“ Their

- “ Their duty dictates ? is their impious mind,
“ Forgetful of my gifts, to hell resign’d ?
“ Has frenzy seiz’d them ? Will no fear of heav’n,
“ Nor shame impede them ? To such actions driv’n,
“ Marks the polluted mind. My hairs are gray,
“ Though once this arm cou’d dare the hostile fray.
“ Once o’er this face fair youth irradiate smil’d,
“ Though now by age and fatal time despoil’d.
“ Though now elate, they will be old one day ;
“ Time has not yet ordain’d my fix’d decay.
“ Youth will not pass in one perpetual bloom ;
“ Fix’d is the close, and certain is our doom.
“ By heav’n’s supreme Director, here I swear,
“ By yon bright sun, by earth, by heav’n, by air,
“ By the pale moon, and this resplendent throne,
“ No ill from me these impious sons have known.
“ I gave them armies, train’d them to be great,
“ And wise astronomers well vers’d in fate.
“ Many a year had pass’d, with patriot care ;
“ To each I justly gave an equal share.

“ Justice

- “ Justice I deem’d the guide of my design,
“ No partial acts, or sentiments were mine,
“ The fear of heav’n decided ev’ry deed,
“ And truth, with honour fraught, each act decreed.
“ When the august Omnipotent above
“ Gave me the globe, with more than patriot love
“ I taught the nations all the arts of peace,
“ Rais’d them to honours, and bade discord cease.
“ Till now, obedient actions mark’d their life;
“ From me Ahermen leads them into strife.
“ Dread the divine resentment; let each thought
“ Be by Omnipotence and justice taught.
“ Mark what I say; no balmy flow’r will blow
“ From the rank seed, or fragrant fruitage grow.
“ Such sentiments as theirs, such venom’d speech,
“ Th’ infernal pow’rs of hell cou’d only teach.
“ This palace, where immortal splendors shine,
“ Will not, ye impious! be for ever mine.
“ Ambition veils your sight, the dæmons guide;
“ The serpent rules you with relentless pride.

“ Ignobly

“ Ignobly will you fall ; my day is o’er ;
“ Peace my delight ; contention is no more.
“ An old man speaks ; did not ambition seize
“ These youthful princes, or gay baubles please ?
“ Say what are thrones, or pond’rous heaps of wealth ?
“ Will they preserve them, or restore to health ?
“ Let ev’ry pious heart submit to God,
“ Pursue his mandates, and obey his rod.
“ That when the awful day of judgement’s near,
“ Just your reflections, and your conscience clear.
“ Many like you have trod this mortal plain,
“ Foes to repose, and slaves to endless pain.
“ Who aims the dart against a brother’s breast,
“ Is damn’d by fame, his future life distressed.
“ Their harden’d hearts let thy reflections guide,
“ Lead them to honour, and to virtuous pride ;
“ Let this ambition that now rules their soul,
“ Obedient bend to wisdom’s bright control.”——
The envoy heard : submissive to the ground
He bow’d, retires ; and now with rapid bound

Vaults

Vaults on his courser ; swift as winds he flies,
To bear the answer to his native skies.
To Eritch, Feredoon his thoughts declares ;
All that had pass'd ; sad subject of his cares !
“ These warlike sons, as hostile as a foe,
“ With mad ambition, and with fury glow.
“ For thus the stars ordain ; in vice alone
“ Their souls delight, ambitious of thy throne !
“ Full are their realms of warriors fierce and brave,
“ In battle dreadful as the roaring wave.
“ Many a brother, such as thine, appears,
“ When such a throne awakes their rival years.
“ The flow'r that once delighted ev'ry eye,
“ If torn by storms, neglected it will die.
“ Then arm thy bands, and meet the hostile foe,
“ Whose breasts with fury for the battle glow.
“ Such their designs ; if life be worth thy care,
“ Display thy riches, and thy arms prepare.
“ If with the dawn thy bands not dare their arms,
“ Their eager souls will burst in loud alarms.

“ Thy force alone protected by the skies,

“ Without allies, will eminently rise.”

Eritch, in whom fair wisdom stood confest,

With grateful accents thus his fire addrest :

“ Behold, O monarch of Irania's plain !

“ The labyrinth of fate, how fruitless, vain !

“ As changing winds she whirls her fickle pow'rs,

“ Then why with pensive sorrow cloud our hours ?

“ Time in one moment changes ev'ry scene,

“ The brilliant splendor, and the mind serene.

“ Grief soars on high, death spreads its awful wing,

“ And the delusive hope of life's gay spring

“ Lies mould'ring in the grave. Then tell me why

“ Shou'd we plant trees to reach the azure sky,

“ When its vile fruit, or wither'd branch, may sink

“ With blasted foliage ? On th' eternal brink

“ Each moment hangs ; revolving suns have shone,

“ And blaz'd resplendent on this royal throne.

“ Who knows the future ? for thy eye has seen

“ Warriors and monarchs gild the transient scene ;

“ And

- “ And more will see. The crimes of ages past,
 “ Howe’er great, my brothers have furpast.
 “ If you command, my father, and my king,
 “ From this ungen’rous world my flight I’ll wing;
 “ These domes, this sceptre, and this throne of state,
 “ Without regret I’ll quit; e’en now, elate,
 “ Without a guard, I’ll seek the hostile train,
 “ And thus the chiefs address in friendly strain : —
 “ From noble lineage, monarchs, do we spring,
 “ Why dare to action our imperial king?
 “ Whose thoughts for you teem with a parent’s care;
 “ Why let ambition rule, as light as air?
 “ Mark Gemshaid’s fate; his splendor is no more;
 “ Vain were his jewels, and the costly store.
 “ A day will come when pungent grief shall rise;
 “ Repress your rage, and supplicate the skies.
 “ Let gentle peace diffuse her radiant charms;
 “ Ah! how more pleasing than war’s fierce alarms.”
 The royal sire replies, “ In thy wise strain
 “ The light of virtue glows; yet mark how vain:

- “ Thy soft benevolence, the gentle shield
“ Of peace is your delight ; while to the field
“ Your brothers dare ; remember the bright blaze
“ Of yon high orb diffuses equal rays.
“ Mild is your answer, and your words are peace ;
“ War is their strain : your kind intentions cease !
“ So rich a mind in ev’ry virtuous lore,
“ Shou’d fly the wily serpent’s venom’d pow’r.
“ For thee the poison will these fiends prepare ;
“ Mark’d is their fate, and this the stars declare :
“ If still determinate you seek their plain,
“ Chuse some brave warriors, and a faithful train.
“ A letter with my orders will I send,
“ To the false brother, to the treach’rous friend.
“ That I may view thy safe return once more,
“ And joyful clasp thee on thy native shore.”

On paper spotted with the leaf of gold,
Such as kings use when they their thoughts unfold,
The monarch writes. “ To chiefs of mighty name,
“ That they may act deserving of their fame,

“ I write ;

- “ I write ; to warriors of superior birth,
“ To martial kings who rule the circling earth ;
“ To him who governs on the Western plain,
“ To him who China rules with peaceful reign.
“ The secrets of the world to you are known,
“ Brave, and deserving an imperial throne.
“ Let night from your superior deeds display,
“ The glorious lustre of refulgent day.
“ To my commands attend ; no grief is mine ;
“ In all my sons the rays of glory shine.
“ Nor gorgeous palaces, nor costly plate,
“ Nor thrones of gold, nor aggrandizing state,
“ Please my ambition ; to behold your pow’r,
“ On just foundations eminently tow’r,
“ Centers my every wish ; for you alone,
“ Much have my thoughts resolv’d ; my labours shone.
“ The brother against whom your anger rose
“ Ne’er did you wrong ; his breast with virtue glows ;
“ E’en now, unarm’d, he seeks your warlike land,
“ And bears the olive branches in his hand.

“ Much

" Much does he wish his brothers to behold,
 " And quit for you his radiant throne of gold.
 " The hero's mind's display'd in such a deed;
 " To wait your nod he mounts his generous steed.
 " He, as the younger son, his duty knows;
 " To please his brothers, (surely not his foes!)
 " Is all his joy; him as a monarch treat,
 " With joy receive him in the royal seat;
 " And when some time has past in friendly strain,
 " Return him joyful to his native plain."
 Seal'd with the royal name the letter goes.
 With grief the eye of Feredoon o'erflows,
 To see his Erich ready to depart;
 Some faithful warriors and some men of art
 Attend his journey; thus compell'd to roam,
 The traveller with sorrow quits his home:
 Soon he arriv'd; his unsuspecting mind
 Dreams of no ill by artifice design'd.
 With all the pomp of war, and war's alarms,
 The artful brothers clasp him in their arms.

Some

Some newer plan their treach'rous breast designs :
Their souls were fierce, and virtue his refines.
In feign'd embraces they receiv'd the chief,
Torn their reflections by ambitious grief.
While his fair mind with gen'rous thoughts o'erflows,
They reach the palace, scene of future woes.
The warlike troops on Eritch wond'ring gaze,
And deem him worthy of immortal praise.
All, all exclaim, the empire of the earth
Wou'd suit such greatness, such exalted worth.
His radiant looks wou'd captivate mankind,
His lustre dazzle, and engage the mind.
In throngs the soldiers crowd, while high his name
Sounds in the air, pre-eminent in fame.
His equal ne'er adorn'd the splendid scene ;
Of godlike manners, and of mind serene.
This Sulm saw, and rage his soul inspires :
He left the field, provok'd with jealous fires
And sanguinary thoughts : from ev'ry eye
Sulm and Toor retire ; each method try

To

To ruin Eritch ; Sulm in these strains
Addresses Toor : “ Why, on these martial plains,
“ Beam these bright troops ? you did not mark their eyes,
“ Their voice on our return ; to the high skies
“ Their acclamations rose. When from this land
“ We march’d, they were submissive to command.
“ But now to Eritch all their wishes bend ;
“ They know no other king, the army’s friend !
“ Iran, ere this, our rage provok’d alone :
“ If the high tow’ring tree is not o’erthrown,
“ Its branches will o’ershadow all the world,
“ While our fair pow’rs are into atoms hurl’d.”
In the dark night their consultations past ;
They leave their closet, with revenge o’ercast ;
Glowing with rage, intent on their design,
Aw’d by no shame, or moral or divine.
Envenom’d pleasure fires their vengeful breast ;
Eritch they seek, whom worth and honour blest,
When in their tent he view’d the royal pair,
With kind benevolence he meets them there.

To the high chair he leads the brother kings,

In converse gay, they speak of various things.

When Toor abruptly spoke : " Audacious boy !

" The younger thou ! our thrones, our realms enjoy !

" Was the high sceptre fit for you alone,

" The rich tiara, the Kianian throne ?

" Turan, it seems, the desolate and poor,

" Was suited, partial prince ! for humble Toor.

" Our elder brother justly glows with rage,

" The Western realms, unworthy of his age !

" On you, the younger, ev'ry splendor waits,

" On you the king bestows his mighty states."

'Twas thus he spoke. Eritch, with mind serene,

Thus wisely answer'd : " If the gorgeous scene,

" Or thrones, O king ! thy high ambition please,

" Complete your wishes, and let future ease

" Irradiate on your mind : for me, I swear,

" No sceptres charm, or no imperial chair.

" Not Iran, China, or the farthest West,

" Nor royal eminence, allure my breast.

“ What are these gaudy phantoms of the brain ?

“ Though Iran once confess'd my gentle reign,

“ No more I wish it : for to you I yield

“ Its golden throne, and cultivated field.

“ Let rage subside ; I am no adverse foe ;

“ Ah ! let not anger 'gainst a brother glow !

“ On terms like these, the empire of mankind,

“ Its stately grandeur, wou'd not please my mind.

“ Shou'd you to heav'n spread high your tow'ring state,

“ Ah ! what avails it at the hour of fate ?

“ 'Tis not from youth that these concessions spring,

“ Such manly sentiments adorn a king.”

He spoke ; but Toor replied not to the strain ;

Indignant passions in his bosom reign.

Truth anger'd more : enrag'd the tyrant rose,

His words, his eye, with rising fury glows.

The chair of state he raises in his hands,

At Eritch dash'd it ; while unmov'd he stands,

And thus addresses : “ Why this storm of rage ?

“ Does not the fear of heav'n thy breast engage ?

“ Does

- “ Does not the reverence that you owe our fire
 “ Awe you to shame ? and check this impious ire ?
 “ Why then destroy ? I yield my ev’ry pow’r ;
 “ My blood in heav’n will mark your destin’d hour.
 “ Act not th’ affassin, what can it avail ?
 “ Without disguise, I speak an honest tale.
 “ You live in pow’r, and eminence sublime,
 “ Me, you wou’d murder ! say, what cause or crime
 “ Provokes to such a deed ? in secret shades
 “ I’ll pass my days ; where no desire pervades
 “ Of pow’r or thrones ; where with an humble share
 “ Of fortune’s gifts, I’ll breathe the vital air :
 “ As the poor ant that picks the straggling grain,
 “ And lives on little gather’d from the plain.
 “ The throne is thine ! the fated wish is thine !
 “ War not with heav’n, with yon immortal shrine.
 “ From blood, a brother’s blood ! what peace can spring ?
 “ Why plunge in endless woe a parent king ?”
 He spoke ; still silent Toor : though in his eyes
 Fierce rage prevails, the same resentments rise.

Toor draws his fabre ; at one fatal blow
He laid his brother and the hero low.
Strong were his limbs as elephants ; no more
To rise, he fell, all welt'ring in his gore.
So the tall cypress droops its lofty head ;
Pale were his cheeks, their roseate blossoms fled.
Thus Eritch died, the gen'rous and the brave !
Thus basely plung'd in fortune's hostile wave.
And thou, Oh fate ! who rais'd him high in pow'r,
Deserted left him in the mortal hour.
I know not, fate, to whom thou art a friend,
For to no virtue will thy fury bend.
To age, you languor pour through ev'ry vein,
As fruit in autumn when o'ercharg'd with rain,
You point our lives ; from thee, and thee alone,
Grief marks the virtuous, and pervades the throne.
Many an honour'd king, without a cause,
Has sunk the victim of thy adverse laws.
Now Eritch's head, Oh ! early fatal doom !
With musk, and amber, with each sweet perfume,

Was

Was fill'd. The brothers now with one accord,
Thus bade the servants tell their royal lord :
“ Here view your son, the darling of your breast ;
“ To whom your thrones and the Kianian vest
“ You gave : now let your partial heart design
“ The gorgeous sceptre and the treasur'd mine,
“ To his pale ghost. The high, the tow'ring tree
“ Falls plung'd for ever in the eternal sea.”
To Turan, Toor : to Greece, now Sulm goes,
Unaw'd they triumph in a parent's woes.
With fond anxiety the godlike king,
And the whole army, chide the tardy wing
Of time ! when near approach'd the promis'd hour,
(For who cou'd fathom fate's impervious pow'r ?)
A gorgeous throne with jewels studded o'er,
And all the treasures of the orient shore,
The king prepares. He quits the chair of state,
And hastes, vain hope ! to meet his son elate.
The richest wines Irania's vintage yields,
And the gay minstrels charm the martial fields.

On

On elephants the drum and tabors play;
And splendid arches, such as grace the day
Of Persian triumph, all prepar'd to go ;
When, from afar, with solemn dirge, and flow,
' Midst clouds of dust, a man of sorrow rose,
His face, the picture of corroding woes !
Deep were his sighs : a golden urn he bore,
(With filk the head of Eritch cover'd o'er)
By sorrow worn his livid face appears,
And all his cheek was dew'd with purple tears :
To Feredoon he came ; the urn of gold
He, groaning, opens, dreadful to behold !
From his pale visage, and his falt'ring tongue,
The monarch fear'd some awful horror hung.
The filk around the head a fervant tears——
The head of Eritch pale, and wan appears !
From his high steed the fainting monarch falls,
And the whole sorrowing train on Eritch calls.
Sunk were his eyes ! his face of livid hue !
Far different scenes his happier fancy drew !

Now

Now they return ; pale anguish led the way,
Torn were the colours, and the minstrel's lay
Was silent now. The universal grief
With ebony had mark'd each woe-struck chief.
No more the drum, or flute's enliv'ning sound,
Teaches the warrior, or his steed, to bound.
They all dismount : each foldier weeps aloud ;
As when all heav'n, by some tempestuous cloud,
Is darken'd o'er. Their forrowing breasts they tear ;
All call on Eritch with a wild despair.
“ The stars,” they cry, “ who mark'd thy fatal end,
“ Will change their course, and to thy murd'ers bend.”
One truth attend ; let not the meteor blaze,
Or this vain world delude with dazzling rays.
’Tis vain, ’tis idle, a delusive dream !
Nor fancy fortune is, as she may seem.
Shou’d foes acknowledg’d strive to wound your breast,
Harbour no vengeance, and relieve distress ;
But if a friend assures of high esteem,
Watch all his actions, varying from his theme.

Sore griev'd each warrior, and with anguish tore,
 " Loudly lamenting on the sounding shore."
 The king to Eritch's gardens bends his way,
 Once the gay scene, resplendent as the day !
 Where Eritch's hours in pleas'd amusement flow'd,
 Where social pleasures innocently glow'd :
 His father, tott'ring with the weight of grief,
 Bears the pale head of the lov'd murder'd chief.
 To the high throne he cast his swollen eyes,
 No Eritch there ; once favour'd by ths skies !
 O'er all the gardens lucid fountains play'd,
 And choicest trees spread round their verdant shade.
 Here gay pavilions, and here cool retreats,
 Here flowing streams, and high embow'ring seats,
 Once pleas'd its lord. The mournful father goes
 To where the edifice of Eritch rose.
 And in his hand the pallid head he bore !
 Grief sunk his soul and all his bosom tore.
 His loud laments and agonizing cries
 Resound to Saturn, to the farthest skies ;

He

He fires the gardens, tears his aged hair,
Rends his wan cheeks, sad picture of despair !
Large drops of blood ran streaming from his eyes,
He dips his belt in sanguinary dyes.

On the lone earth he sat, and all around
The flames arise, and scorch the smoking ground.
Hope fled for ever ; oft the head he views,
And oft to God his pious pray'r renews.

“ Oh ! God, divine Director ! Power august !

“ View this pale head, now mould'ring into dust :

“ Murder'd without a cause ; while tygers wild

“ Howl o'er the body of my darling child !

“ Oh ! may these impious feel the woes I know,

“ May all their days in anguish'd sorrow flow !

“ Let their whole frame be pierc'd by venom'd darts !

“ Let the voracious reptile tear their hearts !

“ Oh ! grant my pray'r ! Oh ! let from Eritch spring

“ A vengeful hero, who, with martial wing,

“ Will headlong hurl them to the realms of hell,

“ Revenge his fire, these murd'ring fiends expel.

“ Him let me view, triumphant, wise, and brave !

“ Then sink with pleasure in the lonely grave.”

’Twas thus he spoke, still groaning as he lay ;

No higher sorrows nature cou’d display.

Sunk were his eyes ; on the damp ground his head

Was lowly laid : “ My boy, alas ! is dead ;

“ Much do I grieve, my son ; for ne’er before

“ Thus laid a monarch welt’ring in his gore.

“ Thou child of fame ! just was thy ev’ry thought ;

“ Thy valu’d life the fiend Ahermen fought.

“ Thy winding sheet the furious tygers close,

“ And thy last sigh was rapture to thy foes.”

So loud he weeps, so loud proclaims his grief,

The forrowing ærials mourn the pious chief.

All Iran waits, and ev’ry princely friend

Crowd to their king, and all their anguish blend.

Vain their condolence, for their looks display

Passion and sorrow in alternate sway.

In deepest mourning all the chiefs appear ;

This pensive scene, so solitary, drear,

Pass'd on for several days. Death seem'd to reign
O'er moving statues of severest pain.
Some time elaps'd ; his sorrows to dispel,
The monarch goes to where the females dwell.
A maid he saw, once his fond son's delight,
And Mahafreed her name ; pleas'd with the sight,
For pregnant was the fair, his hopes arise :
Joy once again beam'd in his aged eyes.
“ He comes, the avenger comes : ” and when the hour
Of birth approach'd, to his enraptur'd pow'r
She gave a daughter. He exerts his care ;
Blooming the infant grew, divinely fair !
In all her manners Eritch's soul was seen,
The same her beauty, and the same her mien.
As she increas'd in years her flowing hair
In curling tresses wanton'd in the air.
Bright as the pleiades bloom'd her roseate face ;
Her lovely form irradiates many a grace.
For Poshung Feredoon intends her hand :
Though for some time he stays the nuptial band.

Poshung, the nephew of the godlike king ;
(From the same honour'd race the heroes spring)
Of soul heroic ! worthy of a throne,
The royal sceptre, the Kianian zone.
The king now joins their hands, and bliss sublime
In nuptial harmony employs their time.
Revolving heav'ns their blissful hours adorn :
Gay hope inspires, a blooming child is born !
The nurse to Feredoon swift bears the boy,
And cries exulting, " View the promis'd joy ! " —
" Eritch new born, will charm the future hour,"
The king exclaims ; (while ev'ry pleasing pow'r
Fills his fond soul.) " My Eritch lives again."
(He clasp'd the infant, and with grateful strain
Pour'd all his gratitude to heav'n divine.)
" Blest be this day ! no more will I repine.
" This day destructive to my Eritch's foes."
Rich gifts the nurse he gave ; and transport glows
O'er all his soul. (When he beheld the boy,
He saw his glories, and the future joy.)

" If

“ If heav’n my Eritch snatch’d from these fond arms,
“ Another son, another Eritch, charms.
“ His parents glow with elevated worth,
“ What gen’rous fruit from such distinguish’d birth !”
He bade the cups, and flowing bowl appear,
And nam’d the child the warlike Munochere.
The darling boy, the source of his delight,
Ne’er was a moment absent from his fight.
A royal train attends ; each heart was gay,
And musk, and roseate flow’rs obstruct his way.
Silken umbrellas shade him from the sun,
And stars propitiate beam upon the young,
The gallant boy ; with ev’ry knowledge fraught,
In war instructed, and in science taught.
Near godlike Feredoon, a warlike train
(The king commands) attend him on the plain.
A splendid sword he gave, a golden throne,
A rich tiara, a Kianian zone.
The diadem with jewels blazing o’er,
And royal treasures, a resplendent store !

A num’rous

A num'rous army, tents of rich brocade,
Of tygers' skins, and costly tissues made ;
And Indian blades with purest gold inlaid.
Arabian steeds, and bows that never fail,
Armour and helmets, warlike coats of mail,
Lances, and shields Chinese, the king bestows :
And in the arsenal the monarch shews
All implements of war. The rising name
Of Munochere deserv'd imperial fame :
His breast with honour teems. To him the keys
Of all his treasure Feredoon decrees.
The chiefs and warriors of Irania's land
The king directs to bow to his command.
All glow for vengeance ; all his praises sound ;
The richest emeralds they strew around
His royal chair. When now the hero rose
To years of manhood, high his courage glows.
The plan of godlike Feredoon is known,
The chiefs are order'd to attend the throne.

Karun,

Karun, and Karwan, Sherovy, Servan,
(Each the bold leader of a warlike clan)
Their troops prepare. When Feredoon the great
Reviews the army, in imperial state,
The voice of fame to Toor and Sulm bore
Th' important news ; that the high throne once more
Refulgent shone. Sulm and Toor prepare
To meet the storm, yet full of anxious care,
Their fire and Munochere alarm their mind ;
And stars unfav'ring future ills design'd.
Much they revolve ; and o'er their darken'd day
The adverse fates diffuse the hostile ray.
They deem it best an envoy to prepare ;
Confess'd their crime, to supplicate, by pray'r,
The heart of Feredoon. A man they chose
On whose wise tongue soft elocution flows.
Many persuasive strains they now address,
And open'd all the treasure of the west :
The sparkling diamond, and each gift of state,
Boxes of musk, and amber, (future fate,

And

And fear their souls alarm'd) rich furs, brocade,
Garments of filk, and vests of tiffues made,
On elephants were plac'd, of royal size;
And gifts to each attendant they devise.

The envoy they instruct; and in this strain
They bid him hail the chief of Iran's plain:

“ Oh! may the days of Feredoon divine,

“ With health, and with Kianian lustre shine!

“ May his high pow'r to heav'n supreme ascend!

“ May smiling blifs on ev'ry hour attend!

“ Sulm and Toor, with just remorse and shame,

“ Implore forgiveness of thy royal name.

“ Me they have sent thy pardon to obtain:

“ They dare not hope, yet hear their pensive strain!

“ Presents and gifts have soften'd many a breast,

“ And deeds of ill been pardon'd the distrest.

“ Our grief, unequall'd! for the mortal deed

“ 'Twas fate predestin'd, and his death decreed.

“ The serpent world prescribes the human doom;

“ No mortal penetrates the secret gloom.

“ Our

- “ Our foul the dæmon of fierce rage disguis’d,
“ Tore us from you, and impious thoughts devis’d.
“ Hope springs in you ; Oh ! spread thy fav’ring wing !
“ Great though our crimes, fair mercy in a king
“ Will deem them the effect of frantic souls ;
“ Fate spread the net, and ev’ry act controls.
“ Fate sometimes governs with propitiate sway,
“ And sometime hovers with destructive ray.
“ For when the dæmon of ambition reigns,
“ Prudence no more the frantic mind restrains.
“ If anger lights the torch, Oh ! let our pray’rs
“ Conciliate ! and let peace expel our cares !
“ Send the young chief, with his imperial train ;
“ Much do we wish to meet him on the plain
“ Of cordial love ; with love shall duty blend :
“ On him, with fondest care, we will attend.
“ In that bright tree shou’d just resentment rise,
“ We’ll wash it with the water of our eyes.
“ Our warm affection shall our crimes atone ;
“ We yield, repenting ! to the youth our throne.”

The envoy goes full of the fruitless strain,
And saw their wishes and their hopes were vain.
At Feredoon's high doors the gifts he laid,
Who order'd the high throne to be display'd,
Pendant with jewels, deck'd with rich brocade,
Around his throne the martial bands appear,
Pearls round the neck, and pendants in the ear.
Like kings their rich tiaras splendid beam;
On the king's hand, the darling of this theme,
Stood Munochere; and on his head was plac'd
A royal diadem, with splendor grac'd.
The nobles wait: the belts of rich brocade
Glitter afar; their splendid swords inlaid.
The floors appear'd the radiance of the day:
And here the sages sung their moral lay.
On the right hand the leopard, lion bold,
And on the left the elephant behold.
Now to the envoy the bold Sharpour bends,
Who then alighting, to the court ascends.

When

When near the presence, when he saw the throne,

He lowly bow'd ; the king of kings alone

A feat of gold commands. His praises high

The envoy spoke, with artful flattery.

“ Bright as the sceptre are thy royal rays,

“ From thee the earth its scented flow'rs displays.

“ From your bright mandates fair the zephyrs blow,

“ Slave of thy nod ! for thee my life shall flow.”

(Not as th' assassins order'd did he speak

The truth conceal'd, he thought their language weak.)

The godlike Feredoon, induc'd to hear

What artful tale was form'd to catch the ear,

The envoy spoke : “ The slave of thy desires,

“ Low as the dust, alone thy wish inspires.

“ Greatly forgive ! their anxious minds request

“ To view young Munochere, by fame carest.

“ Their thrones they yield ; for him the sword to bear,

“ To shine in arms is now their only care.

“ The splendid diadem, the rich brocade,

“ The sparkling jewel, at his feet are laid.

“ With gifts resplendent pardon to implore ;

“ To him they bend, they now can do no more.”

The monarch heard ; (some answer must I send)

To his high domes he bids the envoy bend.

Of various plans, one pleas'd the monarch best ;

He orders that a letter be addrest

To the bold warrior of the warlike land,

To Gershasp, thron'd on high, with great command.

Tall, manly, fortunate, the hero rose ;

Like yon high orb his bright tiara glows.

In lustre like a Gemsheid did he shine.

(These were the strains that grac'd the monarch's line.)

“ Iran your warriors and your aid requires.

“ Oh ! may propitiate ever bloom your fires,

“ From eastern China to the farthest West ;

“ Honour'd your seal, your pow'r by all confest.

“ Thy youthful warriors and heroic train

“ All beam, like chieftains, and like monarchs reign.

“ The foldiers, who dare brave the lion's rage,

“ For you in arms and hostile fields engage.

“ Still

“ Still glow with honour, and through life still beam,
“ Be still, Oh ! king of Zeïstan ! fame’s bright theme.
“ Know then, brave warrior ! that my sons prepare
“ To lance the javelin, for their only care
“ Are scenes of death ; and in their dæmon eyes,
“ Blood, desolation, and ambition rife.
“ In hearts, a Zokak ; bath’d in Eritch’s fate,
“ To Munochere their dagger points elate.
“ March with thy warriors to Irania’s plain,
“ Eritch avenge ; my soul is full of pain !
“ Oh ! let thy armies chase these impious kings,
“ Bear the young prince on thy triumphant wings.
“ For when you rear aloft thy mighty shield,
“ And show thy grandson in the martial field,
“ The world will darken o’er their impious hours.
“ Karun I send, to claim thy honour’d pow’rs.
“ The voice of justice calls ; when this you read,
“ Haste with thy army, with a warrior’s speed.”
He clos’d the letter with the royal seal,
And Karun speeds his mandates to reveal.

At

At Zeïstan he arriv'd ; with rapid wing
Fame Gerfhasp told, " An envoy from the king
" Haftes to your realms ; and Karun is his name ;
" Of worth distinguish'd, and of martial fame."
With guards unnumber'd, Gerfhasp march'd to meet
The monarch's envoy, to his royal feat
To lead brave Karun : Gerfhasp from afar
Saw clouds of dust proclaim the splendid star.
Approaching near, around the martial train
Soft music warbled to the songster's strain.
When Karun saw the warrior, he alights ;
And courteous speech from Feredoon recites.
He gave the letter ; the meridian chief
Submissive reads, and flies with quick relief
To Iran. This when the monarch knew,
His royal army shines in bright review.
Now near arriv'd, they halt ; when in his sight
The warrior came, his horsemen all alight ;
The chiefs embrace : the king of kings alone
Seats the brave Gerfhasp on a splendid throne.

He

He orders Sulm's envoy to appear,

And bade him now the royal answer hear.

“ I mark'd your message ; can you vainly deem

“ To cloud yon orient sun's conspicuous beam ?

“ Clear is the purport of thy master's strain,

“ As yon refulgent light that gilds the plain.

“ Go, tell these bold, unjust, and shameful lords,

“ Vain is their message ! vain their wilely words !

“ How can expression sketch their dæmon hearts ?

“ And while for Munochere they spread their arts,

“ Where is my Eritch ? to the brutes a prey !

“ In the cold urn his head ! In open day

“ They flew my Eritch. Now these dæmons aim

“ To stab his son ; infernals, void of shame !

“ But tell them, when they view my Munochere,

“ A grove of lances, and the pointed spear,

“ Shall guard his breast. They shall behold him then,

“ With armies circled round the lion's den.

“ On neighing steeds the daring horsemen shine,

“ Karun and Sharpour lead the martial line.

“ Saum

- “ Saum, Nooster, Nureman, shall fire the trains,
“ And Cyrus, monarch of Arabia's plains !
“ With warring nations, battling by his side,
“ He breathes alarms, and checks their impious pride.
“ The lofty tree, from Eritch's sacred source,
“ His blood shall expiate with resistless force.
“ For from his hour of death no pleasure flow'd,
“ Hope fled my breast, and no resentment glow'd.
“ Sad recollection all repose denied;
“ For forrowing years e'en war and vengeance died ;
“ But, from the tree they levell'd to the ground,
“ A branch has ris'n, which, with a lion's found,
“ Shall, teeming with vindictive courage, burn
“ Their prostrate towns ; and all their pow'r o'erturn.
“ The arm of Iran, Gershasp, Gemsheid's line,
“ And Saum with nations now in armour shine.
“ Where is their boasted prowess ? all thy speech
“ My anger to disarm, and mercy teach,
“ That stars predestin'd, that their hearts disguis'd,
“ Were led by dæmons ; all that you devis'd ;

“ And

- “ And all they said still vibrates on the ear.
“ Who acts unjustly, and unaw’d by fear,
“ Can ne’er be blest, defil’d by hell-born stains ;
“ Or e’er expect to view th’ Elyzian plains.
“ Let man act right, no future ills will rise ;
“ Just let his actions please th’ immortal skies.
“ Black is your soul ; your elocution glows,
“ And virtuous semblance in your language flows :
“ But in the earth, and in the future world,
“ Clear to each eye their deeds will be unfurl’d.
“ ’Tis heaven’s decree my Erich shall not die
“ Thus unaveng’d : this cow-grav’d sword on high
“ Shall give the blow to vengeance ; aid of heav’n !
“ These warring elephants to me are giv’n.
“ These, these shall expiate the flowing blood,
“ Till their vile souls lie welt’ring in the flood.
“ No treasure shall be spar’d : this iv’ry throne,
“ These kingdoms, sceptres, and this splendid zone,
“ Shall all be given : and my fury spread,
“ Till they shall pay the forfeit of his head.

“ Know ! Munochere, the lion’s child, shall rise ;

“ These aged arms will wash the bloody dyes

“ In just revenge. This is my fix’d resolve ;

“ While life beholds the spangled stars revolve,

“ No time wou’d shake the fix’d resentment high :

“ I heard thy message, this my just reply.

“ Hence from my sight !” The envoy saw his rage,

Saw Munochere, the hero of the age !

And with a downcast eye retires, and grieves,

As the fair flow’r despoil’d of all its leaves.

He mounts his steed, sees mighty realms in arms,

Sees future fate wou’d burst in high alarms ;

Sees clouds on clouds in heav’n revolving roll,

Sees Toor and Sulm fall in their control.

Swift as the wind he pushes on his steed,

Full of the answer Feredoon decreed.

With pensive thought he eyes the Western plain,

And views a tent which he approach’d with pain ;

The tent of Sulm, round a num’rous train.

Here

Here Toor and Sulm dire reflections fling,

The guards announce the envoy to the king.

When seated in the tent by his command :

“ Much did he question of Irania’s land ;

“ Of the new king, the army, and the throne ;

“ What chief, what warriors, what tiaras shone ;

“ And much of Feredoon ; whate’er he knew,

“ What glorious scene presented to his view ;

“ What was predoom’d ; and whom the king’s vizier ;

“ The treasurer whom of youthful Munochere ;

“ What general, statesmen, and what chiefs attend ;

“ What realms he saw ; for whom the fates ascend.”——

The envoy answers, “ In the realms of light

“ I ne’er beheld a spectacle so bright.

“ Spring blows eternal through the blest domains,

“ Gay as the spring on the Elyzian plains.

“ The floors of amber, and the walls of gold ;

“ To heav’n his treasures, and his gems are roll’d.

“ The smile of paradise around him plays,

“ And floreate gardens ev’ry scene displays.

- “ The royal palace tips the vaulted skies,
“ And near the king, lions and leopards rise.
“ Beneath his throne, the globe; the splendid chair,
“ On elephants, high glitters in the air;
“ His warriors shine in one resplendent blaze;
“ The silver tabors play; the trumpets raise
“ The soul to war: so num’rous is the train,
“ Whene’er they march upon the martial plain,
“ The earth appears to move: their loud acclaim
“ Reaches the skies, and speaks their monarch’s fame.
“ The king receiv’d me with engaging grace;
“ White were his hairs, still ruddy was his face.
“ The moon’s mild rays around the monarch shone,
“ The bright tiara, the Kianian zone,
“ With rubies beam’d. War sparkl’d in his eye,
“ Though soft his language as the ev’ning sky.
“ In him are center’d all the world’s desires;
“ Their fears, their hopes, ’tis he alone inspires;
“ You wou’d have said great Gemsheid lives again,
“ And Tahmuraz, who bound in iron chain

“ The

- “ The fiercest dæmons, will once more appear
“ In the bright form of youthful Munochere.
“ On his right hand he sat; his manly mien
“ Sketch’d the whole soul, as valiant as serene.
“ Gao I saw, the blacksmith fam’d in arms:
“ And Karun, leader of war’s fierce alarms.
“ Cyrus the king’s vizier, who glorious reigns,
“ With gentle sway, o’er blest Arabia’s plains.
“ Gerhasp, the bravest warrior of the land,
“ Guards the bright throne, and leads the victor band.
“ Such streams of wealth, so splendid, bright a store,
“ Ne’er did I view; no tongue cou’d count them o’er.
“ Karun, and Gowgan, lions in the field!
“ Saum, fam’d to dart the lance, th’ jav’lin wield.
“ Fierce as the tiger Sherovy moves along;
“ And Sharpour, glorious ’midst th’ embattled throng!
“ One camp the realm. And shou’d the mighty trains
“ March to these kingdoms, all our hills and plains
“ Wou’d be o’erspread, Fierce vengeance fires each eye;
“ War is the general voice, the general cry.”

What

What Feredoon declar'd, whate'er he knew,
 The envoy told. Struck with the future view,
 Pale fear on Toor and Sulm trembling sat;
 Alarm'd, and startling at impending fate.
 Much they consult; but wise reflection fled,
 And adverse stars their baneful influence shed.
 Thus Toor exclaims; "This lion-boy must die;
 "In death's lone grave his eminence shall lie.
 "He fame deserves whom Feredoon will praise,
 "Great will he triumph by his grandfire's rays.
 "'Tis time to draw the sword, without delay,
 "To brave these heroes to the warlike fray."
 Through China, and the western world, they call
 Th' intrepid foldier; warriors, chieftains, all
 Obey the mandate; num'rous was the train,
 As stars in heav'n; they seek Iranian's plain.
 On warring elephants, with armour bright,
 The army shone, all eager for the fight.
 They reach'd the borders of Irania's land;
 Fame told the monarch of the hostile band:

To

To Munochere he spoke; "Go, lead thy force,
"To where the Oxus bends her wat'ry course.
"There hostile armies lay; the man of birth
"Fears not the arm of war, when led by worth.
"The furious hunter, acting without thought,
"(Lions around him) in the snare is caught.
"Conduct will lead you to the destin'd prey:
"The worthless fall, though glitt'ring for a day.
"Were you not here, I'd seek the hostile train,
"And lead bright conquest to the martial plain."
Thus Munochere replies; "My royal sire!
"Near are thy foes, and brave thy awful ire:
"They seek destruction, mad with wild despair;
"They fall, as tempests, bursting in the air,
"With their own force: and never shall these arms,
"By heav'n, I swear! e'er cease the fierce alarms,
"Till these vile parricides shall bite the ground,
"And their loud clamours to the skies resound.
"Not one shall breathe to bid contention rise,
"Or war again with the offended skies."

Karun he orders to th' embattl'd field ;
Pitches his tents, and buckling on the shield,
High wav'd his cow-grav'd sword. The num'rous force,
As waves impetuous, urge their furious course ;
Drive all before them, as the rolling floods ;
Or waving mountains o'er the trembling woods.
Pale was the sun, the light involv'd in shades ;
Such noise and tumult the whole realm pervades,
No accent cou'd be heard ; the neighing steeds
Silence the tabor, and the martial reeds.
Eight miles the army reach'd on either side ;
All gallant warriors ! and their monarch's pride !
The throne of jewels blazes in the rear ;
Three hundred thousand lift the pointed spear.
As many bullocks, camels, bear the weight
Of arms and baggage to the field of fate.
Each chief in armour, and resplendent arms,
Glowing for vengeance, breathe war's dire alarms.
High in the front the ban of Gao shines,
All blazing high along th' embattl'd lines.

The

The neighing courser angry paws the ground ;
All leave the city at the trumpet's found.
The warlike Karun leads the num'rous band ;
And Narvend past, a solitary strand !
A plain appears ; arrang'd the army shines ;
The chief encamps, reviews his martial lines.
On the right wing, Kobad and Saum inspire ;
And Gerhasp on the left with glowing fire :
High in the center Cyrus, Munochere,
Bright as the moon in the imperial sphere,
Bright as the sun, when, with his morning rays,
He tips the mountains with refulgent blaze.
Saum, Karun, warriors of resistless force !
Breathe war and vengeance with impetuous course.
Kobad, the son of Nureman the great,
The ranks inspire ; and himself, elate,
Gay as a bride (he trains the warlike band)
When the fond bridegroom first receives her hand.
The silver tabors raise the glowing breast,
And fire to war the chiefs in armour drest.

Sulm and Toor, with mighty chiefs in arms,
Traverse the desert, fierce with war's alarms.
They lead their troops indignant to the plain,
And pass'd the stream near Elan's fertile reign.
The guard advanc'd, 'twas Kobad that commands,
As light'ning swift Toor leads his fiercest bands.
And Kobad thus addresses : " Swift as air,
" Vain chief ! to Munochere this message bear :
" O ! king, new fangled ! fatherless, and mean !
" If sprung from Eritch, from a royal queen,
" Who gave this armour ? from a father's hand
" This cow-grav'd sword ; and this imperial land ? " —
" I will," the chief replies, " thy message bear :
" Vain is thy speech, thy menace light as air.
" Hast thou forgot thy various deeds of shame ?
" Has vice and folly seiz'd thy impious frame ?
" Fate hovers o'er, its warm resentment dread :
" 'Twill burst in tempests o'er thy guilty head.
" And when the beasts shall on thy body prey,
" Say, will compassion mourn thy fallen ray ?

- " From Narvend to remotest China rise
 " The well-arm'd chiefs, the ban of Gao flies.
 " When you shall see these marshall'd legions beam,
 " Trembling you'll wake from this illusive dream."
 Thus having said, the royal tent he seeks,
 And Toor's vain message to the monarch speaks.
 With smiling aspect Munochere replies ;
 " Vain is the fool, and fearless of the skies.
 " The Lord of Heav'n, the Monarch of mankind,
 " (Who sees the deep recesses of the mind)
 " Knows from imperial Eritch that I spring,
 " My birth attested by Irania's king.
 " These boasters, in the thunder of the field,
 " Shall view my honours, and my birth reveal'd.
 " By yon pale moon ! by yon refulgent light !
 " This arm shall hurl them through the thickest fight.
 " Though death and horror all their ranks surround,
 " This arm shall lay these dæmons on the ground.
 " Their heads I'll bear amidst the warring crowd :
 " My father's shade for vengeance calls aloud !

“ Their vaunted prowess, and their blood-stain'd throne,

“ The murder of my father shall atone.”

The royal tables spread, soft music plays,

And wine enlivens with its sparkling rays.

Now night her sable mantle spreads around ;

And watchful sentries all the camp surround.

Karun himself examines ev'ry post ;

Bright Cyrus, leader of th' Arabian host,

Thus spoke ; “ These foes are dæmons on the earth,

“ Dark are their souls, devoid of ev'ry worth !

“ The God of battle rears aloft his spear,

“ And high revenge now urges on the rear.”

Thus having said, the soldiers he address ;

“ Warriors renown'd ! let ev'ry gallant breast

“ Glow high with courage ; on your armour bind,

“ And let your monarch's shade warm ev'ry mind.

“ On you the God of Heav'n propitiate smiles ;

“ For those of honor'd fame whom death despoils,

“ Shall paradise lay wide her blissful gate,

“ Each error pardon'd, and victorious fate

“ Crown

“ Crown them with laurels ; and the envied train,

“ ‘Midst sages great, shall walk th’ Elyzian plain.

“ For those who live triumphant o’er their foes,

“ Imperial gifts the victor king bestows.

“ Then, when the dawn beholds the fierce alarm,

“ Commence the action, raise the vengeful arm.

“ Stand to your ranks, in order move along ;

“ Ah ! let no fear intimidate the throng !”

They all reply, “ Obedient to command,

“ The slaves of duty, are this num’rous band.

“ Our life the king’s ; deep as the Oxus flows,

“ This plain shall deluge with our barb’rous foes.”

Thus having said, each to his post repairs,

Lost in revenge were nature’s other cares.

Now with the dawn each soldier takes his shield ;

A grove of lances glitter’d in the field !

Vengeance was pictur’d in each warrior’s eye ;

So the earth’s motion bodes an earthquake night.

Arms, troops, and horsemen, gild the martial fight ;

All move in order, glowing for the fight.

As

As when vast fleets o'erspread the wat'ry main,
The earth is cover'd by the martial train.
The silver drums, and echoing trumpets found,
The moving army shakes the trembling ground.
Thus when the Nile o'erflows with rapid force,
And levels all with its impetuous course :
Thus elephants, when stung by keen desire,
Resistless ! frantic ! rage with furious ire.
Now at the trumpet's sound the ranks mov'd flow,
And though their breast with high resentments glow,
Great was the order of the num'rous train,
They mov'd a mountain on the martial plain.
The battle glows ; the stream of human blood
Dies all the field, a sanguinary flood !
As some vast dome, the elephants on high
Stupendous fall, in mighty ruin lie.
All move, all glow ; 'tis Munochere inspires ;
For him the foldier burns with vengeful fires.
Pleas'd with his excellence, e'en fate approves,
And with bright rays around the hero moves.

Night

Night clos'd the scene, and changing fortune whirls ;
Now joy irradiates, now the tempest hurls.
Sulm and Toor deprest'd, resolve that night
In secret guile shou'd renovate the fight ;
Far different thoughts bright Munochere possess,
The day to battle, and the night to rest.
Sulm and Toor, until the midnight hour,
Consult what arts wou'd give him to their pow'r.
Awake to treach'ry, now these chiefs decide,
(Though neither sense nor judgement were their guide)
In the dark hour to stab the youthful king,
And deluge all the plain from life's fair spring.
Now o'er the world the fable mantle spread,
And beauteous light had hid her orient head.
In arms these impious now arrange their force,
Burning to urge their sanguinary course.
The spies to Munochere their arts inform ;
Prepar'd to guard against the rising storm.
Thus spoke the chief : " Bright Karun lead the host,
" Here shall I watch, here tranquil take my post."

A brave,

A brave, a chosen band, the king attends ;
At night the wily Toor his army bends
With flow and silent steps, prepar'd for war.
Karun he saw, and, glitt'ring from afar,
The ban of Gao, saw their brandish'd arms,
Inevitably saw war's fierce alarms.
He gave the signal ; clouds of dust arise,
Dark horror reigns, and many a hero dies.
Thus when the heav'ns with clouds are cover'd o'er,
And darkness shades with horror all the shore ;
The melting snow, descending through the air,
Through low'ring clouds, appears more white and fair :
So the bright swords, amidst the gloom of night,
With polish'd radiance beam reflecting light.
As various angles of the well-cut stone
Alternate play, the sparkling lances shone.
Now in the rear of Toor bright Munochere
Leaves no retreat from shame, from death, and fear.
Astonish'd ! Toor looks round with wild amaze,
Spurs his fierce courser ; all the warriors gaze :

Now

Now Munochere pursues, permits no rest;
Fire in his eye, and vengeance in his breast.

At Toor he threw the lance; Toor's trembling sp
Falls from his hand, benumb'd with pallid fear.

Swift as the winds, he seiz'd him as he fled,
And on the ground he dash'd his impious head;

Then lopp'd it off. The body, as a prey,
Gave to the beasts; and now he speeds away

To his own tents; the early dawn displays
The scene of conquest with its orient rays.

To Feredoon the action he relates,
The smile of fortune, his propitiate fates.

“ Great, just, triumphant, ever may you shine !

“ Let gratitude and conquest still be mine.

“ My guide through life, to honour point the road,

“ Protect the worthy, and the base explode.

“ To the High Lord of ev'ry earthly throne,

“ The King of kings ! Omnipotence his own !

“ I bend my knee ; the spring of truth from thee

“ How purely flows, surpassing all degree.

“ From thee, the Lord of Heav’n ! all splendor springs.
“ To thee I bend, immortal King of kings !
“ At Turan we arriv’d, the furious train
“ Saw for three days war deluge all the plain.
“ At night the foe prepar’d deceitful war ;
“ Each post was guarded ; scarce a distant star
“ Gave us a glimm’ring light ; when Toor I saw,
“ The dæmon Toor, despising ev’ry law ;
“ I push’d my courser on ; he fled as air,
“ And dropt his jav’lin, aw’d by sad despair.
“ I reach’d the fiend, I struck him with my spear,
“ And pois’d him with my hand, o’erpower’d by fear.
“ Then dash’d the dragon prostrate on the ground,
“ Lopp’d his dire head ; and now, with rapid bound,
“ To Sulm on we march ; compassion shews
“ No lenient hand to such destroying foes.
“ They murder’d Eritch ; desolation spreads
“ O’er all their race, and marks their impious heads.
“ The head of Toor I send.”——His swiftest steed
He gave an envoy, bids him haste with speed.

The

The envoy, aw'd by shame, the message bears
To Iran, where the king with anxious cares
Waits th' event; the envoy fears to shew
The king the head of Toor, although a foe.
Though children thus are vile, yet when pale death
Closes the scene, for ever stops their breath,
Parents will pay the tribute of a tear.
Great were his crimes, the foe to Munochere!
The envoy gave the urn. The monarch's pray'rs
Are rais'd to guard the darling of his cares.
Fame quickly bears to Sulm Toor's defeat;
The vanquish'd army, whither to retreat?
A lofty fort he seeks, that in his rear
Towers aloft to the etherial sphere.
He bends his march to try if fate again,
And fickle time, wou'd raise his mould'ring reign.
The spies to Munochere his views declare:
" Shall he repose? his shatter'd force repair?
" Haste, lose no time; for if the fort he gains,
" (The chief exclaims) high danger still remains.

- “ Steep its access, in clouds its head appears,
“ With rivers circled ; 'tis the work of years.
“ For wealth, provisions, and all hostile arms,
“ Lie in the fort, and dare war's loud alarms.
“ When o'er the castle all his troops are spread,
“ War, horrid war ! again will raise her head.”
This having said, brave Karun thus rejoins ;
“ Grant me permission for to pierce his lines ;
“ Swift will I go, urge on the rapid horse,
“ Seize on the fort, and stop his impious course ;
“ And shou'd he dare to meet me on the plain,
“ The field shall deluge with his Grecian train.
“ Give me the ring of Toor ; his ban I'll bear ;
“ This is my counsel : swift as lightest air
“ To the high fort my foldiers will I bring,
“ And place them there, borne safe on fortune's wing.
“ Gerhasp, myself, will head the chosen band ;
“ And night shall lead us to the hostile land.
“ Silence must seal the deed.”——“ Thy plan is wise ;
“ Go, ye brave warriors ! favour'd by the skies !”

(The

(The chief exclaims) Swift with the ev'ning gale

Karun prepares, while fortune fills the sail.

To seek the river near the banks he came,

And spoke to Sherovy of intrepid fame.

“ Disguis'd I seek the fort ; auspicious fate

“ Shall lead the army to the hostile gate.

“ There to the chief commanding I will show

“ The ring and seal of Toor, that impious foe !

“ And when the morn shall spread her sacred light,

“ Bright Gao's ban shall wave upon the height :

“ Then when you hear the sudden clamour rise,

“ Urge on thy force, and seize the mighty prize.”

Thus having said, disguis'd the warrior goes,

And reach'd the fort ; the ring and seal he shows :

The chief addresses : “ Toor's commands I bear,

“ His order by his mandate I declare,

“ That each exertion shou'd your cares employ,

“ That no repose, and soft, unwarlike joy,

“ Shou'd enervate your arms : with furious might

“ Shou'd Munochere approach, 'tis yours to fight ;

“ To

“ To guard your posts, head-long the foe expel,

“ And drive his army to the realms of hell.”

When the chief heard, and when he saw the ring,

Wide flew the gates, obedient to their king.

He saw the semblance of the truth appear,

Nor knew deceit was ambush'd in the rear.

The tongue of man may flow with specious art;

'Tis God alone can read th' internal heart.

Let justice and benevolence be thine,

And let reflection o'er thy actions shine.

I sing whate'er is right, whate'er is wrong,

'Tis truth that dignifies the epic song.

When Karun enter'd, then the leader thought,

From mighty Toor the ring and seal was brought.

At dawn the ban upon the fort appears;

High tempests rise, and shake th' etherial spheres.

This Sherovy hearing, saw the colours wave,

March'd on his troops, impetuous, fierce, and brave

Forc'd wide the gates, now slaughter rears her hand,

And levels all with her destructive wand.

On

On one side Karun urges all his pow'rs,
And death with Sherovy darts the missile show'rs.
The stream of blood now tinges ev'ry scene,
And stains with purple the o'erflowing green.
Then when the sun had reach'd meridian height,
No foes appear'd, or dar'd renew the fight.
The fort is hid; and clouds of rolling flame
Shade ev'ry eye, and cover all the stream.
Hot blow the winds, the captive warriors groan;
Contention ceases, and the fort's their own.
When the bright planet bends his ev'ning ray,
Dispell'd the mists, the loud winds lull'd away.
Twelve thousand fell; with blood the river steams,
And the plain flow'd in sanguinary streams.
To Munochere the warlike Karun goes,
And tells his triumph o'er the captive foes.
To whom the king; "Coëval with my name,
" May conquest wait on Karun's martial fame.
" Since your departure a new foe appears,
" Grandson to Zohak; the vile Kakou rears

" His

" His hostile arm, with millions in his train :
 " Many he flew, the pride of Iran's plain !"
 " Now Sulm's anxious to renew the fight,
 " Proud of his ally, his demoniac might.
 " Fame speaks him fierce, intrepid in the field,
 " Aw'd by no fear, to ev'ry virtue steel'd.
 " Till now his name had never reach'd my ears,
 " Unknown his prowess to Irania's peers.
 " But shou'd he dare to meet me on the plain,
 " The sword decides who most deserves to reign.
 Karun replies ; " No mortal will presume
 " To brave thy arm, and meet his certain doom.
 " Who is this Kakou ? dæmon of the war !
 " He ne'er will dare to meet Irania's star.
 " For shou'd the leopard brave thy mighty arm,
 " Soon wou'd he fly, o'erpow'r'd with just alarm.
 " Shou'd you approve, to Kakou I will go,
 " And close contention with this furious foe."
 To whom the king ; " Meet not this dæmon's rage,
 " Already have thy labours charm'd the age.

" By

“ By skill the fort is thine, its gorgeous spoils ;
“ Repose shou’d crown thee from thy various toils.”
Scarce had he spoke, the tabor sounds alarms,
The noise of horses and of clanging arms ;
A cloud of dust the misty air o’erspreads,
The burnish’d sword a diamond’s lustre sheds.
Now man to man are seen, now shield to shield ;
The eager armies battle for the field.
The tainted winds with human gore arise,
And snare the kergesh darting at the prize.
The earth with motion to its center shook ;
To heav’n the clamour and the tumult broke.
Upon the plain the streams in torrents pour ;
The armies close, destruction hovers o’er.
E’en nature sigh’d to view the carnage spread,
And hid in clouds her venerable head.
Here Karun rages with a lion’s fires,
High in the center Munochere inspires.
Through warring millions Kakou mows his way,
And braves the youthful monarch to the fray.

With boasting taunts, and with demoniac force,
To Munochere he spurs his furious horse.
Now arm to arm the thund'ring strokes rebound ;
So warring elephants, with mighty found,
Urge on to battle ; Kakou strikes the blow ;
Well aim'd, it shook the helmet of his foe.
Breaks through his armour ; gallant Munochere
Returns the stroke, and, darting fierce his spear,
Pierces the helmet on the dæmon's head,
And perforates the skin. By fury led,
The combat lasts till noon ; declining day
Saw the fierce battle rage with equal sway.
Now as the sun retires with lessen'd beams,
And blood o'erflows the plains with purpl'd streams,
No voice cou'd speak, no language paint the fight,
All trembling nature shudders at the fight.
The youthful hero breathes ; his drooping pow'rs
Revive again, again the battle low'rs.
Now Kakou dares the combat ; now again
The warriors strive, now ev'ry finew strain.

With

With dext'rous arm he seiz'd fierce Kakou's zone,
 Pierc'd his vile foul; when, utt'ring many a groan,
 The fainting dæmon fell. In the fierce fray
 The elephant thus crushes on his prey.
 With seven fierce blows the victor Munochere
 Struck the vile body, still appall'd by fear.
 Thus fell, inglorious! all the dæmon's pow'rs;
 His boasted strength, and all his vaunted tow'rs;
 Thus, by the race he scorn'd, he meets his doom:
 A fate predestin'd from his mother's womb.
 No more the battle fills proud Sulm's soul;
 His ally conquer'd, to the high control
 Of fate he yields; while grief transfix'd his mind:
 He dreads the death by Munochere design'd.
 Now in confusion Sulm swiftly flies;
 The victor follows, all retreat denies.
 How cou'd he hope to fly the num'rous train,
 To reach the fort, or view the Grecian plain?
 Fir'd with success, the youthful king in speed,
 Glowing with rage, spurs his Arabian steed.

Soon near the fugitive the king appears,
Still Sulm urges on, appall'd by fears.
When Munochere exclaim'd, as near he came :
“ Affaffin warrior ! monarch void of shame !
“ Those impious hands steep'd in a brother's gore,
“ To feize his sceptre, and his costly store !
“ Where are thy glories ? whither wou'd you fly ?
“ My just revenge shall all retreat deny.
“ I bring the branch of that exalted tree
“ You basely levell'd, now it springs for thee.
“ Why fly, inglorious ! from thy promis'd throne ?
“ For thee another, a Kianian zone,
“ Great Feredoon prepares ; soon will you reign,
“ With all your merits, in th' infernal plain ;
“ And if the branch shou'd prove a bleeding thorn,
“ It sprung from you, and from thy crimes is born.”
Thus said, he urg'd his steed ; he pierc'd his brain,
And one fierce blow his body laid in twain.
Upon a lance he plac'd the impious head :
Loud acclamations all the plains o'erspread.

Such warlike actions, such superior might,
 Mark the brave hero, dreadful in the fight !
 As wand'ring flocks without the herdsmen rove,
 So Sult's troops without their leader move.
 Now here, now there, o'er mountains and the plain,
 The conquer'd fly from the pursuing train.
 When thus a chief, for eloquence renown'd,
 Calls to the army, trembling at the sound :
 " Bend to the king thy steps, declare thy grief,
 " And speak like warriors to a warrior chief !
 " The conquer'd to the victor monarch sue,
 " Who reigns o'er all the splendid planet views.
 " Many a rich and noble chief commands,
 " War is our trade, and not ignoble bands.
 " We came to battle royal Munochere ;
 " Yet now, obedient, we respectful rear
 " Our hands subdu'd. We wish not to provoke,
 " The rage of war, submissive to the yoke !
 " We boast no strength, are conscious of no crime ;
 " Act as you please, our king, our chief sublime !

They

Thus

Thus spake the chief. The monarch thus replies :

“ No gifts I want, fame is my only prize.

“ Those who dare act inimical to heav’n,

“ Or bow to dæmons, from my fight are driven.

“ Curst be the dæmons’ race ! their arts I scorn ;

“ Vile are their actions, and from Eblis born.

“ But if my foes have chang’d their former strain,

“ Their offer’d friendship I shall not disdain.

“ Heav’n crown’d my arms, expell’d an impious king,

“ Justice shall reign, and tyrants feel the sting.

“ Reflect, and ground your arms ! each thought of ill

“ Drive from your breast, and let fair honour fill

“ Your ev’ry act ; let there be no deceit ;

“ That, when to Greece or Turan you retreat,

“ Peace and divine benevolence may crown

“ Your future days, and lead you to renown.”

Thus having said, the thronging crowds exclaim,

“ War is no more ! high shines the hero’s fame !

“ Dead is the tyrant !” All the army bows

To the brave youth, and breathe their faithful vows.

They

They lay their arms before the victor king;
Spears, axes, lances, fwords, the conquer'd bring.
A pile immense ! the king with gracious mien
Receiv'd the chiefs, and peace adorns the scene.
To each, according to their ranks, a place
The conqueror gave, which charm'd the Grecian race.
He sends the captive's head, in martial state,
To fortune's heir, to Feredoon the great.
He writes the king ; the actions past renew'd ;
What plans he follow'd, and what realms subdu'd.
But first to heav'n he bends his fervent pray'rs ;
Then to the king his pious mind declares : —
“ From heav'n thy wisdom springs, thy victor bands,
“ Thy strains persuasive and thy mighty lands ;
“ All are obedient, all thy worth adore ;
“ Thy breast, the source of ev'ry virtuous lore !
“ Great, wise, and just ! by thy o'erspreading arm
“ War is no more, and peace succeeds alarm.
“ Turan and China now submissive yield ;
“ Low lies the tyrant in the well-fought field.

“ His

" His head I send ; the fetter'd world is free ;
 " I haste with speed to bend my suppliant knee.
 " I write to speak the actions that have past,
 " And calm your mind, by dubious fate o'ercaft."
 Now to the fort he Sherovy commands,
 To bring the spoils, and leave the chosen bands.
 He orders him to act as wisdom guides ;
 Cautious and bold ! for war 'tis thought decides ;
 On elephants they place the spoils of war,
 And bring them safely to Irania's star.
 The trumpets found. To Feredoon the great,
 The youthful victor bends in martial state.
 When near Tehmêra, the old anxious king
 Glows to behold the bright, the budding spring
 Of all his hopes ; prepares his warlike train :
 Drums, trumpets, tabors, glitter in the plain.
 On a high elephant he plac'd a throne,
 Where rich brocades, and pendant jewels shone.
 Admiring nature views the splendid scene,
 And smiles with radiance, lovely and serene !

Near

Near to the sea which circles Gelan's shore,
The king arriv'd, to meet his son once more.
With golden bridles, and with belts of gold,
With silver stirrups, dazzling to behold !
With blazing shields, and ev'ry costly store,
Fit for his march the royal camels bore.
Now Feredoon alights ; th' attendant train,
As lions strong, high glitter on the plain.
Around their necks the golden necklace plays,
Their hair of musk, their mien, the chief displays.
All Iran crowds their monarch to attend ;
The foldier's glory ; and the warrior's friend ;
When Munochere the royal standard views,
His army halts ; fair spring her smile renews.
Swift from his horse he flew ; (the branching shoot
Breathing gay youth, will yield delicious fruit)
He kiss'd the ground, and bid the monarch rise
In fame eternal, to his kind'red skies.
The old king bade him mount, and closely press'd
The youthful victor to his aged breast.

Much did he bless him, many tears he shed,
And plac'd his hands with blessings on his head.
To Iran now th' exulting conq'rors bend,
Command that Saum, the warlike chiefs attend.
These lords from Hindostan their armies brought,
To aid the monarch ; and they bravely fought.
When Saum approach'd, the monarch thus express'd
The lab'ring secrets of his aged breast :
“ Be thou a guardian to my royal boy !
“ Death soon this tott'ring fabric will destroy.
“ Pay strict attention, with a gen'rous aim ;
“ The road to honour is the road to fame.
“ (To heav'n the pious monarch rais'd his eye)
“ Thou God of justice ! thron'd with truth on high !
“ Thou erst declar'd that Feredoon was just !
“ And midst this scene of trouble and of dust
“ Remember'd me ; from thee my justice flow'd,
“ From thee this throne, and all my splendor glow'd.
“ You gave me mines of unexhausted store ;
“ Taught me with pious ardor to adore !

“ Oh !

“ Oh ! lead me now from this terrestrial plain !

“ Tir’d with the world, the trying scene of pain !

“ No more my soul its earthly clay approves ;

“ Far other thoughts my aged bosom moves :”

Now Sherovy arrives with all the spoil ;

He gifts each warrior for his arduous toil.

Ten days elaps’d, the high regalia spread ;

He plac’d the crown upon the victor’s head.

Bids him be seated on the royal throne,

And bids him wear the bright Kianian zone.

Then sage, and gen’rous counsel he imparts ;

The purest dictates of the noblest arts !

The solemn scene concludes his ev’ning ray ;

Clos’d are the leaves ; no more can fortune play :

No more the monarch dazzles on the throne.

The heads of Sulm, Eritch, Toor, alone,

Near Feredoon were plac’d. He dropp’d a tear,

A tear of grief o’er their untimely bier !

Some time in sorrow pass’d the monarch’s days :

When thus he spoke ; “ The bright, the dazzling rays,

“ That crown’d my mingled hours of life, are o’er,

“ And fate now leads me to a different shore.

“ From these three heads my joy, my grief arose ;

“ From rage, ambition, and perverseness flows

“ The ills, that waited on their poison’d youth :

“ From disobedience, and contempt of truth,

“ I lost them all.” And now, with sorrow weak,

The purple drops bedew’d his aged cheek.

Wan grief was pictur’d in his pallid face :

A few short days with sad and solemn grace,

The monarch liv’d. Though Feredoon is dead,

His name, his glories, o’er the world are spread,

Of honour’d age he dy’d ! bright justice smil’d,

And truth with knowledge for his glory toil’d.

Now Munochere the great tiara throws

From his young brow, where genuine anguish flows.

Now deepest mourning covers all his frame ;

He builds a high mausoleum, known to fame.

Bright azure colours decorate the tomb,

Silver and gold, with musk and sweet perfume,

Are

Are strow'd around. The high, the ivory throne,
The rich tiara, and Kianian zone,
Are plac'd within the tomb. Brave Munochere
Leads the procession, holds the silent bier ;
So solemn rites and sacred rules require :
And Feredoon, whose fame cou'd soar no higher,
He plac'd within the tomb ; then clos'd the door :
For Feredoon in sorrow left the shore.
Seven days in grief, too poignant to describe,
The king, the city, and the martial tribe,
The sons of Iran mourn'd their monarch's fate ;
The world fallacious, and its transient state,
Fickle as winds ; the man of wisdom spurns
Its blazing meteors, its inconstant turns.
If I behold the mirror of the world,
Its wiles, its bauble playthings are unfurl'd :
And does desire of life thy soul pervade ?
Think that death soon will lead thee to the shade.
All the world gives, how soon she takes away !
For one short hour she beams with transient ray.

Though

Though coral form'd thy doors, of what avail ?
 All fall alike in death's furrounding pale.
 Though poor, though humble, though a mighty king,
 Death makes you equal in his equal wing.
 Here joy and sorrow in oblivion sleep ;
 Ambition glows not ; grief forgets to weep.
 Think not perpetual spring will crown your days,
 Or fortune beam with ever-smiling rays.

Though

THE ARGUMENT

SHÂNĀMĒH.

BOOK VII.

THE

THE ARGUMENT.

MUNOCHERE ascends the throne of Iran; his address to the warriors—The speech of Saum—Who returns to Zeistan—The birth of Zalzer, who is exposed by his father on the mountain Elburs—The Semurgh saves, and protects the infant—As he grows up, travellers observe his manly appearance, and relate the story to Saum; who in visions is upbraided with his conduct to his son—deeply afflicted, he repairs to Elburs, where the Semurgh delivers Zalzer to his father—The guardian bird, as a proof of her affection, gives Zalzer a feather, which she directs him to burn whenever any particular misfortune attends him—The conciliation of Saum—Munochere sends his son Nooder to direct the attendance of Saum and Zalzer, who obey the mandate—The instructions of the king respecting the young warrior—He orders the astrologers to declare the future destiny of Zalzer—Their declaration of his future eminence—The king distributes different kingdoms to the warriors—Saum returns to Zeistan, and, giving his son to the charge of the sages, marches to Mazinderan—His charge to the guardians of Zalzer—The improvement

ment of the young chief, who travels to Kabul, and is met by the lord of that country, a tributary to Saum—Zalzer becomes enamoured of Rodahver, the daughter of Mehrab — A description of Rodahver's person—Rodahver, animated by the delineation of the character of Zalzer by Mehrab, contrives an interview; in which they pledge their mutual faith—Zalzer declares his attachment to the nobles, who disapprove, on account of the difference of sect, and apprehensive of the indignation of Saum, they advise him to address the king—The letter of Zalzer to Saum—Saum, provoked at the intelligence, convenes the sages, who prognosticate the birth of a celebrated hero, from the union of Zalzer and Rodahver—In consequence Saum returns a favourable reply, which Zalzer sends to Rodahver—The slave detected by Scendocht, the Queen of Kabul, her anger, and apprehension of the indignation of Mehrab—The lord of Kabul, perceiving her grief, demands the cause—Who declares the attachment of Rodahver—Mehrab determines to destroy Rodahver—The intreaties of Scendocht—Mehrab relents—Is again provoked at the sight of Rodahver—The displeasure of Munochere—He directs Nooder to bring Saum to the presence—Who attends the king, and relates his wars in Mazinderan—Declares the attachment of Zalzer—The

king commands him to level the cities of Mehrab—Saum marches—Zalzer, provoked, meets his father, upbraids him with his conduct to him in his early infancy—Saum then addresses the king, and directs his son to bear the letter—Mehrab, enraged at the order of the king, menaces the fate of Rodahver—Is again prevented by Scendocht, who goes to Saum, and obtains his assent—Returns to the palace of Mehrab.

T H E

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

B O O K VII.

SEVEN days in mourning past, now high affairs

Call the young monarch to his kingly cares.

Now seated high with the Kianian crown,

Each dire magician is expell'd the town.

The warriors praise the actions of the king,

And the whole world his various virtues sing.

Q q 2

His

His strength, his justice, wisdom, all admire,

His high benevolence, his gen'rous fire.

When to the army thus the king exprest

The high ideas of his mighty breast :

“ Behold your monarch seated on the throne !

“ Shou'd justice call, its dictates are my own :

“ Shou'd war in tempest spread her ample shield,

“ Prepar'd for battle, I shall dare the field :

“ Shou'd peace with white-rob'd garb my cares demand,

“ Fair peace in safety walks Irania's land.

“ Far spread my mandates, destiny my friend,

“ Kings are my subjects, to my orders bend.

“ Bright fortune favours with propitiate nod,

“ And all my royal grandeur springs from God.

“ Vice is a stranger to your monarch's breast ;

“ By night I dare the battle, scorning rest.

“ In me the fire of Perzin blazes wide ;

“ The ban of Gao conquers by my side.

“ For me the mines their costly treasures yield :

“ Light of the throne ! and fearless in the field !

“ To

- “ To suppliant crowds, vast as the spreading sea,
“ To all I give, to all my gifts decree.
“ My soul in mounting flames in battle soars :
“ No ill I suffer on Irania's shores.
“ Through realms remote I march the warlike train,
“ And conquest walks triumphant on the plain.
“ Though thus pre-eminent, though greatly brave,
“ A mortal am I, as the meanest slave.
“ To God my pious adoration springs,
“ To him, omnipotent ! the King of kings !
“ Without his aid, low grov'ling on the earth,
“ My splendor sinks, the glories of my birth !
“ From God my triumph and my grandeur flows,
“ From him the conquest o'er my impious foes.
“ I follow Feredoon, divinely blest !
“ I follow all the dictates of his breast :
“ Though he was old, and youth this bosom fires,
“ 'Tis Feredoon that ev'ry thought inspires :
“ He gave this throne, this rich tiara gave,
“ This martial army, and the warriors brave.

“ My

“ My future deeds my gratitude shall show ;
“ And worth with honour through the world shall glow.
“ Through the seven realms those who delight in ill,
“ And leave their faith, and not their duties fill,
“ Who spurn the poor, who their dependants scorn,
“ Atheists in heart, of impious dæmons born !
“ Whom God approves not, each detested realm,
“ This arm in vengeance shall with fire o’erwhelm.”

The warriors bow ; the road his grandfire chose

Our king pursues, the victor of his foes !

Long, long may fortune ev’ry blessing show’r,

Thron’d high in wisdom, eminence, and pow’r ;

Our souls are thine, for thee our wishes flow,

Our swords unsheath, and all our passions glow ;

Saum standing up the royal youth addrest ;

“ In you, just prince ! are all my hopes imprest.

“ On you our plaudits wait, the hero’s pride !

“ From kings descended, and to kings ally’d ;

“ From the first race who wore Irania’s crown,

“ Aided by heav’n, and guided by renown.

“ While

“ While as the lion brave you guide the horſe,
“ And rule him dext’rous o’er th’ embattl’d courſe,
“ May fate ſtill lead triumphant in the field;
“ And heav’n thy glories and thy perſon ſhield.
“ Ador’d on earth, to ev’ry mortal known,
“ The wonder bright of the Kianian throne!
“ High in the throng a radiant ſun appear,
“ Fierce on the plain, the elephant of war!
“ May the reſplendent throne be ever thine,
“ And deſtiny to thee her pow’rs reſign.
“ In Hindoſtan no more magicians low’r;
“ But peace and pleaſure crown the tranquil hour.
“ To dare the mock of hoſtile arms is mine;
“ Fair peace now courts thee, and repoſe is thine.
“ Thy army I will lead o’er hoſtile plains,
“ And bring to thee thy adverſe foes in chains.
“ Form’d by thy grandfire to the ſhock of arms,
“ ’Tis thine to reign, ſecure from war’s alarms.”
The monarch prais’d him, royal gifts beſtow’d;
Such gifts the monarch and the foldiër ſhow’d.

Saum takes his leave ; a brave and martial train,
The warrior follow'd to his native plain.
Gay fortune smil'd, the world appears elate ; —
And now from old tradition I relate
A wond'rous tale ; the gen'rous Saum behold !
Mark the revolving world, in playful fold,
Toys o'er our lives ! no son bright Saum possest ;
The constant object of his anxious breast.
One beauteous mistress was his darling care ;
Her cheek of roses, and of musk her hair.
The fair was pregnant ; on her beauties hung
The orient lustre of the rising sun.
Gay hope, array'd in future glory, smil'd ;
Each budding grace adorn'd the lovely child.
The sun's bright radiance in his form appears,
The moon's mild lustre crowns his infant years.
Of snowy white his hair ; seven days were o'er
Ere Saum was told the child his mistress bore.
All ran to see the wonder, all amaz'd,
And all astonish'd startled as they gaz'd.

A nurse,

A nurse, with more than manly strength endu'd,

Attends on Saum, and thus her strain pursu'd :

“ Blest be thy days ! victorious o'er thy foe ;

“ Thy pray'r is granted, let thy joys o'erflow.

“ An infant lion in thy son is born,

“ Brave will he be, and all thy days adorn.

“ A face of paradise, his hair of snow,

“ No vice inherent, beauteous as the doe.

“ This destiny commands ; then be thou blest,

“ And let no pensive thought disturb thy breast.”

Saum seeks the private mansion of the fair ;

And when he view'd the wonder, its white hair,

Its body dark, fair hope deserts his mind,

He dreaded the reproach of all mankind.

Reflecting how to act, he rais'd to heav'n

His sorrowing eye. “ Is this the boy that's giv'n

“ To my fond wish ! yet God can do no wrong ;

“ His will be done ; if midst the martial throng,

“ Worthless I am, and if demoniac deeds

“ Disgrace my life, if vice my bosom leads,

" Reward me as I merit, gracious heav'n !
 " On seas tempestuous are my senses driv'n.
 " Quick flows my blood : it seems Ahermen's child ;
 " White hair, dark body, dire demoniac, wild.
 " And shou'd the warriors question on his birth,
 " What answer give ? the scorn of all the earth !
 " A pyebald leopard, or of fairy race ;
 " Iran I quit, the scene of my disgrace.
 " Iran delights no more. (He turn'd in ire)
 " Such is my fate : quick lead this infant dire
 " To hills remote." To Elburs him they bear ;
 (The famous Elburs tow'rs aloft in air)
 There dwells the Semurgh, of celestial fame,
 Her fav'rite mansion, sacred by her name.
 They plac'd the infant on the harden'd stone,
 And left him there, unpitied and alone :
 Thus was the infant chief, without a crime,
 Left by his fire to wither in his prime.
 Cruel ! to quit the infant at the breast,
 And thus desert him, leave him there distress'd.

He

He did not form his frame, or frightful hair ;
Why give his life remorseless to despair ?
Then Saum thus spoke ; “ I fought with anxious pray’r
“ A martial son ; you ev’ry hope destroy ;
“ In form a dæmon, bane of all my joy.”
Away he speeds ; the hungry infant’s cries
Reach’d the bright Semurgh ; who, with pitying eyes,
Beheld the child ; its cradle form’d of stone,
And earth its nurse, all naked and alone.
No shade protects him from the solar rays,
Crying for food disconsolate he lays.
E’en the wild leopard nourishes its young,
Supplies with food, and shelters from the sun.
Heav’n to the Semurgh, fav’ring ! gave the child,
Who kindly nurs’d it in the mountain wild.
Where beasts of prey, and various birds repair,
She kindly foster’d with a mother’s care.
Among her young, by heav’n’s protecting hand,
Safe lay the infant in this barren land.

She saw her brood voracious to destroy,
And with her guardian hand protects the boy.
As he grew up, the will of fate appears ;
And travellers observ'd his growing years
In eminence arise, and wonder more ;
A mountain crusted with the silver ore
His body seems : no deed is e'er conceal'd ;
Act well or ill, by time it is reveal'd.
Fame spreads the story to the circling states ;
Saum hears the tale, and wonders at the fates.
One night as pensive Saum had clos'd his eyes,
In his disorder'd fancy visions rise.
He thought he saw a man with rapid course,
Urge on from Hindostan his Arab horse :
A warlike figure ; who, in martial praise,
Spoke of his son, his great and op'ning rays.
Alarm'd, he calls the sages, tells his dream,
And asks their judgement of the vision'd theme.
“ Your child still lives, and fame reports him brave,
“ Victorious still o'er fortune's adverse wave ;”

The

The sage reply'd, " Those who obey not heav'n,
" In darkness wand'ring, are to perils driv'n.
" Stones were his cradle, earth his only nurse ;
" By birds protected from a parent's curse.
" Whether in deserts, though a beast of prey,
" Though finny monsters of the wat'ry way,
" Still o'er their young they watch with guardian care.
" The bird still hovers o'er, when in the air,
" The unfledg'd young first 'tempt the dang'rous flight ;
" And never lets them fly beyond the sight.
" From his white hair first sprung the infant's grief ;
" Think not he's dead, but seek the youthful chief.
" Where heav'n protects, nor heat nor cold avail :
" Guarded by heav'n, all artifice will fail.
" Bow with submission, fervent to your God,
" All nature, justice, hangs upon his nod."

Saum with the dawn proposes to depart,
And seek high Elburs with repenting heart.

As he repos'd, he saw a mountain rise,
In Hindostan the waving standard flies ;

A youth

A youth approach'd his couch, on whom attend
A num'rous army, and two sages bend
On either side; when one thus Saum addrest,
And thus reproach'd the feelings of his breast:
“ Know, chief, presumptuous, fearless of the skies!
“ The Semurgh nurs'd thy son, and guards her prize
“ Though white his hair, thy locks will fall away;
“ And imitate the willow in decay.
“ Heav'n gave this boy, while impious Saum, unjust,
“ Laid the deserted infant in the dust.
“ Heav'n cou'd thy hair, in each revolving hour,
“ To various colours change, with mighty pow'r.
“ Heav'n guards that son a parent's breast expell'd;
“ The father spurn'd him, and the skies upheld.”
Now Saum awakes; as lions in a snare
He start'ling roar'd, and dreaded that despair
Was mark'd by fate; and that his crime wou'd bring
Grief and remorse, and future vengeance sting.
He rose; and calls the warriors, and the wife,
And seeks the mountain, where the fav'ring skies

Protect

Protect his son ; he sees the tow'ring height
High as the pleiades, high as mortal fight,
Like a bright star in the etherial spheres :
And high as Saturn a strong mansion rears
Its aërial head ; the chief and all his train,
With wonder struck, alight upon the plain.
They view'd the stones, the high stupendous tow'r,
The awful bird, the hanging rocks that low'r,
And menace fate ; its adamantine seat
No storm cou'd shake, no tempest, or no heat
Of furious fire, cou'd move ; and now around
The mountain he beholds the hero bound ;
Sees his resemblance sparkle in the youth ;
And bows to heav'n, and owns th' immortal truth.
He saw the hand of heav'n with pow'rs august
Shadow his son, omnipotent and just !
No way appears the steep ascent to climb,
Here only birds can wing their flight sublime.
He tries each way to mount the advent'rous height ;
When thus he spoke “ Oh ! God, serenely bright !

“ Above

“ Above the stars, the planetary spheres,
“ To thee I bend, to thee my bosom rears
“ Her forrowing strain : Oh ! lead with fav’ring hand,
“ (Benevolence is thine !) to yon high strand.
“ Restore my son rejected with disgrace,
“ That son is mine, not of Ahermen’s race.”
Heav’n fav’ring, smil’d ; the Semurgh saw the train,
And knew that Saum search’d this distant plain
For his young son ; that not with adverse arm
He came to spread his terrors and alarm.
Then to the youth he speaks : “ My guardian toil
“ Has nurs’d thee safe on this deserted foil,
“ And nam’d thee Dustan, when thy martial fire
“ Abandon’d thee, sad object of his ire !
“ Now teach the world, that, worthy of your name,
“ Your future acts may aggrandize your fame.
“ Brave is thy fire, and ’midst the warriors great ;
“ He comes to seek thee, forrowing o’er thy fate ;
“ Here he can never rise, but I will place
“ Thee near thy fire, the glory of his race !”

This

This when he heard, soft tears his cheeks o'erflow'd,
Man he ne'er saw, his breast with justice glow'd.
Taught by the Semurgh all the arts of speech ;
By heav'n protected from all mortal reach ;
He thus reply'd : " Thy guardian care I own ;
" Thy wing my sceptre, and this rock my throne.
" Kind to my youth, to my misfortunes kind,
" 'Twas you that guarded, and inform'd my mind."
The Semurgh answers ; " When you once behold
" The belt Kianian, and the throne of gold,
" You will exclaim, ' The barren rock displays
" No scene deserving the Kianian rays.'
" Survey mankind, I give thee to the king !
" This parting does not from my anger spring.
" Be ever blest ; with my own young I rear'd
" Thy infant life, to right thy judgement steer'd.
" Shou'd danger hover round, this feather warm ;
" Then you will know my care ; for in a storm,
" In tow'ring clouds, I will appear in air,
" And snatch thee safe from ev'ry human care.

“ Let not oblivion on your nurse attend,
“ And know her always for your faithful friend.
She counsel'd much : then in her ærial wing
She plac'd the youth, and led him to the king.
Long flow'd his hair, with mighty strength he ro
And beaming splendor in his manners glows.
When Saum beheld him, much the chief repin'd,
And to the Semurgh bow'd with grateful mind.
He sung her praises : “ Thou, O ! King of kings !
“ From whom all radiant truth and grandeur springs
“ (The chief exclaim'd) did give this martial boy,
“ And thou did nurse him with a parent's joy.
“ Oh ! may thy foes fall mould'ring to the tomb !
“ And ever smiling pleasure be thy doom !”
He gaz'd at Zal, deserving of a throne ;
The lion youth, the martial warrior shone.
His face the radiance of the sun appears ;
Black eyes, black eyelids, all the bloom of years,
With ruby lips, and ev'ry beauteous grace ;
And his white hair alone deforms his face.

Now

Now Saum with fond paternal pleasure glows,
And o'er his son now many a blessing flows.
When thus he spake; "Let anger love succeed,
"And to oblivion give the cruel deed.
"The slave of God, I bend before his shrine;
"Heav'n gave thee, and by heav'n thou now art mine.
"For you my pow'r shall rise, my splendid throne,
"And my whole soul is rapt in thee alone."
Dress'd as a warrior Zal appear'd sublime:
They quit the mountain for their native clime.
The drums, the tabors, martial music plays,
And the whole army speak the hero's praise.
Saum with his son now reach their native plains,
And high rejoicings fill the warlike trains.
Charm'd with the news which fame, with rapid wing,
From Zebulistan told Irania's king,
Nooder he orders his commands to bear;
And thus his fav'ring thoughts to Saum declare
"Tell him his monarch wishes to behold
"The gallant Dustan, who, as fame has told,

“ Was bred in Elburs, and whate’er his breast

“ Is anxious to obtain, shall be possess.”

Nooder obeys ; he reach’d Zieftania’s plains,

And Saum embraces ; who, with eager strains,

Much questions of the king ; the chief relates

The royal message, and propitiate fates.

Saum bows submissive, with his martial band

Marches obedient to Irania’s land.

Zalzer attends ; the godlike Munochere

The hero meets ; and when his bans appear,

Saum from his horse descends ; the king with speed

Commands the chief to mount his Arab steed.

The conqueror of worlds, and him who reigns

O’er mighty kingdoms, and wide-spreading plains,

March to the throne. The royal carpet spread,

The rich tiara nodding o’er the head

Of royal Munochere ; on either side

Stood Saum and Karun, both their monarch’s pride.

In armour clad, to Munochere they bring

The warlike youth ; while the astonish’d king

Beholds

Beholds the rising sun, and thus exprest

To the fond fire the wonder of his breast :

“ Unequal’d beams thy son ! whose martial form,

“ And manly beauties, speak the son of Saum.

“ The world will say, where’er this youth appears,

“ War is no more, and clos’d are all our fears.

“ Guard the rich mine, instruct his youthful breast ;

“ In the brave lion stands the king confest.

“ Teach him the arts of war, let his young mind

“ With regal speech and knowledge be refin’d.

“ Birds were his tutors, and a rock his feat,

“ Fair wisdom dwells not in the low retreat.”

Saum thus reply’d : (the wond’rous tale relates

Of the bright Semurgh, and the fav’ring fates.)

“ The Semurgh gave, benevolent ! the boy :

“ To you I bring the source of all my joy.”

Now the wise sages, vers’d in heav’nly lore,

The king commands his greatness to explore.

“ How will he rise ? pre-eminently great !

“ What nations conquer ? and what mighty state ?

From

“ How

“ How will he rule ?” The astronomers reply,

“ Great will he shine, his fame will blaze on high.”

The king was pleas'd ; and Saum with rapture glow'd ;

And royal gifts bright Munochere bestow'd.

The decorated steed, the diamond's rays,

The ruby streaming with a purple blaze ;

The Indian sword with purest gold inlaid,

And various jewels, with the rich brocade ;

Fair Grecian slaves in costly garments drest,

And cups of gold with musk and amber prest ;

The sweetest fragrance of each gay perfume,

And the bright carpets of the Persian loom.

Armour and helmets, bows and lances shine ;

Each instrument of war, each martial sign ;

A diadem, a throne, a belt of gold ;

These were the royal gifts to Zal the bold.

From Kabul to the river Sind his reign,

The monarch fix'd, as far as th' Indian plain :

Attested by the royal seal. Now Saum prepares

To leave the court, and thus his soul declares ;

“ From

“ From earth to heav’n thy equal is not known,
“ Wisdom and justice beam around thy throne.
“ The world in pleasure views each rising day,
“ The blest result of thy illustrious sway.
“ For thee the mines their treasur’d heaps resign,
“ And fame shall lead thee to her laurel’d shrine.”
He kiss’d the throne ; the drums, the tabors sound,
All Iran gaz’d to see the warrior bound
On his fierce steed ; when near Zeistania’s plains,
His subjects all exult in grateful strains.
The sparkling jewels at his feet they lay,
And flowers with rich perfumes obstruct his way.
The nobles thus their grateful thoughts express ;
“ May Zal for ever live ! for ever blest !”
To Zal they bow submissive. Now Saum, elate,
Rich gifts presented to the wise and great.
To Zal instruct, he calls the letter’d sage,
And thus address : “ Let Zal thy cares engage ;
“ ’Tis the king’s order to collect a force ;
“ To far Mazinderan I bend my course :

“ And

- “ And to Kergerferan to shine in arms,
“ My eager soul delights in war’s alarms.
“ In early life I dar’d the hostile field,
“ And acted wrong ; for all to fate must yield.
“ My son disgrac’d, a Semurgh fav’d the youth ;
“ What different actions ! the bright God of truth
“ Restor’d my son : with knowledge store his mind,
“ And let his heart by science be refin’d.
“ Know that my ev’ry hope, my ev’ry joy,
“ Is fix’d, is center’d in this martial boy.
“ Teach him the duties worthy of his birth,
“ And let him shine pre-eminent on earth ;
“ The king commands ; my breast with ardour glows
“ To hurl his thunders o’er the adverse foes.
“ (To Zal he look’d) to the wise sage attend,
“ To his instructions with submission bend.
“ Great Zabulistan’s thine ; to thy command
“ This kingdom bows, and all its warlike band.
“ From thee my future bliss or grief will spring ;
“ Thine is the treasure ; learn to be a king.”

The

The youth reply'd, " 'Tis but a tranſient hour
" Since fortune plac'd me in a parent's pow'r.
" Why erſt expel me, why deſert my youth,
" And now command me to the ways of truth?
" Left was the infant on the harden'd ſtone,
" Crying for food, unpitied and alone.
" A den my cradle, and a bird my nurſe,
" Who, kind! protected from a father's curſe.
" Fate ſmil'd auspicious; who can heav'n oppoſe?
" And fortune blunts the thistles of the roſe."
Thus having ſaid, the warlike ſire replies;
" Expel theſe thoughts, and bleſs the fav'ring ſkies.
" For thee ſhall white-rob'd peace her arms extend,
" 'Thine is the throne, and deſtiny thy friend:
" My precepts hear! on thee the ſage ſhall wait,
" Attentive liſten to the wiſe debate;
" All ſciences explore; from wiſdom ſprings
" The warrior's fame, and in the breaſt of kings
" Shou'd eminence be thron'd." The martial train,
Led on by Saum, now glitter on the plain.

With all the pomp of war, with glowing fire,
Two marches Zal attends upon his fire.
There Saum embrac'd his son, and thus addrest,
As fond affection dictates to his breast;
“ Return, my son ; your hours let pleasure crown,
“ Adorn'd by science, rais'd by great renown.”
Now Zal returns. When seated on the throne,
The rich tiara, and the golden zone,
Adorn the youth ; on him the sages wait,
And wise astronomers well vers'd in fate.
The warriors too attend ; they teach the youth
The arts of wisdom, and immortal truth.
Science exploring was their sole delight ;
By day they read, and meditate by night.
Bright as a star the rays of science beam,
Till Zal, exalted by the glorious theme,
Deem'd his own knowledge eminently great ;
Well taught in war, excelling in debate ;
Mankind was dazzled with his rising name,
And all his subjects join to blaze his fame.

Behold

Behold the wonders of revolving heav'n !
In early years to distant mountains driv'n !
Now thron'd in greatness : the repenting fire
His son confesses, full of martial fire.
No more inactive ; Zal with chosen band
To Kabul marches near the Indian strand,
There he encamps, there music charms the soul,
And all the hours in gay luxuriance roll.
There gen'rous gifts the youthful chief bestows ;
There smiling poverty no sorrow knows.
Such are the acts that grace the hero's name,
And in this transient scene exalt to fame.
Here Mehrab reign'd, for mighty strength renown'd,
For beauty fam'd, by heav'nly wisdom crown'd ;
Of Zohak's race : to Saum he tribute paid,
A yearly stipend, and a martial aid.
Soon as he heard that Dufstan fought his plains,
He march'd to meet him with his well-arm'd trains.
Zal hasten'd on, and to his tent he leads
The chief of Kabul, fam'd for manly deeds !

Attendant cities join'd in loud acclaim,
Eager to view the prince adorn'd by fame.
And now the servants spread the sumptuous board,
With richest wines and various viands stor'd.
Mehrab with pleasure kens the hero's face,
Admires his manly form and martial grace,
And thus addrest : " May ev'ry joy be thine !
" And conquest lead to fame's resplendent shrine !"
The chiefs embrace, and part ; when, to his train,
Mehrab thus spoke, in animated strain :
" What eye e'er saw so elegant a form ?
" Equal to shine in peace or guide the storm.
" What chief will dare to meet this rising star,
" Or brave the hero in the fields of war ?"
When Mehrab parted, in seductive strain,
To Zal thus spoke a warrior in his train :
" This Mehrab has a daughter brighter far,
" And far more radiant, than the orient star.
" Tall as the sabbin tree, divinely fair !
" Spotless as iv'ry her beauties are !

" The

" The sweets of paradise around her blow ;
 " Her charms irradiate with celestial glow ;
 " Her jetty locks in graceful ringlets play,
 " Charm ev'ry sense, and steal the soul away.
 " The jetty locks her blooming beauties shade,
 " Pierce through the heart to instant love betray'd.
 " Even and white her well-form'd teeth appear,
 " Not the white rose more delicately clear.
 " Her oval breast no fancy e'er cou'd paint ;
 " Weak were all language, all expression faint.
 " Nor the narcissus, which the florists prize,
 " Equals the beaming lustre of her eyes.
 " The lashes of the eye, in graceful fall,
 " Still add new radiance as they shade the ball.
 " Black are the eyelids, curv'd with wond'rous skill,
 " Seize the whole soul, and ev'ry passion fill.
 " 'Tis all elysium ! how by fortune blest
 " Will be that chief who captivates her breast !"
 The heart of Zal beats high with glowing fires ;
 Repose is banish'd, love alone inspires ;

If

If he beholds the sun, his waking dreams
Delusive deem him but the fair-one's beams.
If musk is scatter'd all around his chair,
'Tis but the essence of the fair-one's hair.
Through the long night his ardent fancy glows ;
Impassion'd sorrow o'er his bosom flows.
Then when the rubied morn in radiant light
Dispels the sacred stillness of the night,
The lover rose ; around the warriors stand,
Him Mehrab visits with a chosen band.
To meet the chief, Zal orders all his train,
And thus address in animated strain :
“ Say, can my throne, or can my kingdom, yield
“ Aught that can please the chief of Kabul's field ? ”
“ Illustrious youth ! ” the warlike chief reply'd,
“ One wish I have, and be not that deny'd.
“ Oh ! grace my mansion with your royal fight,
“ My breast will glow with transport and delight.”
Thus having said, the pensive Zal rejoins ;
“ Honour forbids to view your idol shrines.

“ Say,

“ Say, can no other wish thy soul employ ?

“ Compliance is my first and only joy.”

Mehrab in outward show applauds the chief,

Condemns, within, his faith, and parts with grief.

Though equal praise externally appear'd,

Their different faiths to varying judgement steer'd.

The chiefs of Zal view, with averted eyes,

The man they deem'd deserted by the skies ;

But when they saw their monarch's glowing flame,

All prais'd the daughter, all her charms proclaim.

This feeds the fire ; fair wisdom flies his breast,

And love, almighty love ! his soul possess.

Still he attempts to hide the fierce desires :

“ War,” he exclaims, “ 'tis war alone inspires !

“ No luxury shall enervate my mind,

“ Or be to joys effeminate resign'd.”

Sorrow and care his soul, like cancers, tear :

“ How shall I gain her ? by what ardent care ?

“ How shall I clasp this beauty in my arms,

“ And free my mind from such intense alarms ?”

The

The melting youth the fiercest fires assail,
Now warm in love, and now with anguish pale.
His wife and daughter, each their warrior's joy,
The anxious cares of Mehrab's foul employ.
On his return he lively pictures drew
Of Zal accomplished, lovely to the view.
Like the fair garden of perpetual spring,
Where flow'rs eternal bloom, where nature's songsters sing.

“ Scendocht much questions of his mighty fire,

“ Of Zal's bright form, and of his martial fire.

“ And what advantage from his visit rose ?

“ Far, far from Mehrab be all future woes !

“ Say, does the prince in mountains wild delight ?

“ Does the throne charm him, or the martial fight ?

“ Does fame allure him ? does his nervous form

“ In war impetuous dare the missile storm ? ”

Mehrab replies : “ He like the cypress rears

“ His head on high, and like a God appears.

“ No warrior equals his immortal beams,

“ His amber crown, his scientific themes.

“ When

" When his fierce courser furious paws the ground,
 " No mortal rides him with such active bound.
 " His lion soul, his elephantine frame,
 " Resistless in the battle, seize on fame.
 " Not with more violence the Nile o'erflows,
 " And levels all that dare its course oppose.
 " His ruddy cheeks hang on the wing of youth;
 " Great is his wealth, magnanimous his truth!
 " When, like a dragon in the bloody field,
 " He dares the fray, the boldest warriors yield;
 " White are his hairs, which some a fault esteem;
 " Though long, though flowing, beauteous though they seem.
 " And all mankind, delighted with his strain,
 " Are happy to attend the hero's train."
 Fir'd with the picture, o'er Rodahver's face
 The deep'ning blushes heighten ev'ry grace:
 With eager passion all her bosom glows;
 Love chafes far her balmy soft repose;
 The mad'ning fires urge on the panting maid,
 And various thoughts her yielding mind invade.

Mehrab shou'd ne'er, in such exuberant strain,
Have pour'd the poison through his daughter's vein.

A dæmon rages in the female's breast ;

Description fires, and frantic till possést.

Five slaves attend her, whom she thus addrest :

“ To you, for whom my guardian care has shone,

“ I speak the secret of my mind alone.

“ Hear, and be cautious ; love inflames my soul ;

“ Fierce as the winds my rapid passions roll.

“ Zal reigns triumphant ; if I close my eyes,

“ The soft illusions of his image rise.

“ Sleep flies my couch. Say, then, what blest relief

“ (To you alone 'tis known) can ease my grief ? ”

The slaves, astonish'd that the royal maid

Shou'd be to such improper thoughts betray'd,

Reply'd indignant ; “ Thy bright charms inspire,

“ Pride of the king ! and set the world on fire.

“ From Hindostan to China thy fair frame

“ Charms ev'ry monarch, and each chief of fame.

“ The

- “ The brilliant gem that sparkles o’er these plains,
 “ The star of beauty, where each lustre reigns.
 “ For thee the monarchs of the West shall fight,
 “ And all Kanouge shall hang upon thy eye.
 “ Say, does not shame, and terror of thy fire,
 “ Repress these thoughts, and this unhallow’d fire ?
 “ Say, does thy wishes to the son of Saum,
 “ Without a parent’s will, thy bosom warm ?
 “ Taught by a bird, in hills alone renown’d,
 “ No mother nurs’d him, by a Semurgh crown’d.
 “ Whoe’er wou’d cherish such a strange desire ?
 “ For wond’rous is thy love, thy infant fire.
 “ Thee whom the world admires with raptur’d strains,
 “ Whose image graces all the distant plains !”
 Rodahver heard, and anger fires her breast ;
 She turns indignant, thus her thoughts express ;
 “ Are these your counsels ? slaves ! in early bloom,
 “ Wretched to breathe, the flames of love consume.
 “ Those who on clay can make their rich repast,
 “ Regardless view, torn by the stormy blast,

“ The shatter'd flow'r. I grant that blushing shame
“ Shou'd awe the maid, and lead her on to fame ;
“ But love in triumph bears the conquer'd soul,
“ And the whole world's submits to his control.
“ Shou'd mighty Cæsar, or shou'd Fah-Foor bring
“ The world's great empire, or Irania's king
“ Bribe with his sceptre, or the farthest West,
“ The son of Saum alone can charm my breast.
“ How unavailing do your censures flow !
“ Zal is my soul, for him my wishes glow :
“ His image fills, his praises charm, my mind,
“ The favour'd object of all human kind !
“ Speak not of Foor, or Cæsar, or the West,
“ Enthron'd is Zal for ever in my breast !
“ 'Tis not his person, his external form,
“ Can charm the mind, and all the senses warm ;
“ 'Tis excellence, 'tis wisdom, love of fame,
“ That caught my soul, all center'd in his name.”
The slaves perceiving the remonstrance vain,
One thus addrest her in obedient strain :

“ Oh !

“ Oh ! let the tale be hid in shades of night !

“ Let wisdom guide with her unvarying light.

“ The conscious blush thou’st ne’er the face o’erspread ;

“ Try magic arts, and by obedience led,

“ The chief I’ll bring, secure from all alarms,

“ And safely place him in Rodahver’s arms.”

A radiant smile diffus’d her beauteous face,

And the fair slave she view’d with heighten’d grace,

And thus address’d : “ Thy counsel I approve ;

“ And if success attends upon my love,

“ For thee the clust’ring tree each day shall shoot,

“ And yield for thee a rich, luxuriant fruit.”

With Grecian tiffues drest, with flowing hair,

The slaves to Zal’s encampment now repair.

Near to his tent there glides a lucid stream,

There the slaves sit, religionists they seem,

And scatter flow’rs : while to the other shore,

By fav’ring winds, th’ flow’rs are wafted o’er,

Where Zal’s bright bands upon the maidens gaze ;

The chief himself exclaims with fond amaze,

“ Who

“ Who are these florists ? these religious maids ?

“ From Mehrab’s palace ? from the secret shades

“ Of his recesses ? ” A beauteous slave reply’d :

“ With his fair daughter, nature’s boasted pride !

“ These slaves reside : for thee the flow’rs they bring,

“ For thee the loveliest tribute of the spring.”

’Twas in the month of March, when nature’s drest

In all her charms, propitiate to the blest.

The heart of Zal beat high with anxious care,

He glow’d to converse with these beauteous fair.

How, unobserv’d, to cross the flowing stream,

And, unattended, how adopt his scheme.

With the fair slave alone he bends his way,

His bow and arrow on his shoulders lay :

He saw a partridge, and, with dext’rous aim,

He shot him, falling on the flowing stream.

Near to the other bank he spoke the slave :

“ Haste, bring the bird, and instant cross the wave.”

When near the bank, the maids, in softest strain,

Thus spoke the slave : “ Say, lovely ! on yon plain,

Who

Who is that chief? of what imperial race?

“ So form’d, so dext’rous, so adorn’d with grace?

“ Well may his foes bow, conquer’d, to his will :

“ We ne’er beheld such great, such finish’d skill.”——

“ Do you not know,” the beauteous slave replies,

“ The son of Saum? his fame has reach’d the skies.”

The maidens laugh : “ O vaunt no more his praise,

“ The sun of Mehrab with surpassing rays

“ Eclipses ev’ry king. Her modest eye,

“ Her ivory form awakes the lover’s sigh.

“ Round are her eye-lids, and her teeth of snow,

“ Enamel’d by the hand of nature, glow.

“ Her even nose in due proportion straight ;

“ Her slumb’ring eye wing’d with the lover’s fate ;

“ Her hair of musk, in flowing ringlets curl’d,

“ Plays in the air, and wantons when unfurl’d.

“ Vermilion pictures all her roseate face,

“ And beauty heightens with resistless grace.

“ So lovely are her lips, that e’en the air

“ Dares not approach, but wishes from afar.”

(Each

(Each paid a tribute to her beauty's shrine,
Each stil'd her beauteous, charming, and divine.)

"Go, tell the monarch of our queen's retreat:

"Ah say! how blest, shou'd these accomplish'd meet."

The slave reply'd, and redd'ning with alarms,

"I dare not tell the monarch of her charms."——

"You must, for they alone, (the maids rejoin)

"Deserve each other; in their persons shine

"The glorious lustre of the orb of day,

"The moon's serene and all-refulgent ray!

"Can joy irradiate on the warrior's mind,

"Whose soul's by female softness unrefin'd?

"Nor can the beauty always dwell in shades,

"When love and glory all the breast invades.

"See o'er her young the female falcon sings,

"And anxious covers with protecting wings;

"'Tis nature dictates, by a parent's care

"She wing'd her youth, her progress through the air."

Smiling the slave departs, and seeks the plain,

Where Zal much questions of the maiden train.

And

And why he laugh'd? the slave relates the tale,

And Zal in rapture throws aside the veil.

“ Haste to these florists, he commands ; no more

“ Let flowers be scatter'd on th' opposing shore.

“ Bear the rich gem, the royal message bear,

“ But give in secret, when no spy is there.”

The slave returns, his master's will declares.”

The maids reply, “ When seven the secret shares,

“ Secret it cannot be : if only two

“ (It might be private) the concealment knew.

“ Let Zal himself his sentiments declare.”

They whisper, “ We have caught him in the snare !”

The slave to Zal imparts the artful strain,

Urg'd on by love all thrilling through the vein.

He seeks the maidens, and they speak the fires

That warm Rodahver's breast, and fond desires.

The chief replies, “ Shou'd this thy tale be true,

“ Sad scenes of future grief arise to view.

“ But tell me all, her figure, and her charms.

“ Shou'd you deceive, Oh ! dread impending harms !”

“ Through the whole earth no charms superior shine,
“ Attested be the oath by heav’n divine ;
“ In beauty eminent, in virtuous pride,
“ Like thine her glory,” all the maids reply’d ;
“ Gay blow the roses on her blooming face,
“ And sweet perfumes encircle ev’ry grace ;
“ The sun of beauty round her person beams,
“ Straight as the cypress ; aromatic streams
“ Of musk and amber in her tresses play ;
“ Her taper fingers and her letter’d ray
“ Charm ev’ry mind. The various gems unite
“ To grace her person, dazzling to the sight ;
“ Shou’d China’s artists view the perfect maid,
“ To the refulgent light of heav’n were paid
“ Their adoration.” These melodious strains
Pour the soft poison through Zal’s thrilling veins.
“ High beats my heart,” the chief exulting cry’d ;
“ How shall I view her ? how with fondest pride
“ Speak the warm wishes of my eager mind
“ To her, the loveliest of the female kind ?”——

“ We

“ We shall return,” the well-pleas’d slaves rejoin,

“ And lay thy picture at Rodahver’s shrine.

“ No guile we know, and to her virgin mind

“ We’ll sketch you glorious, gallant, and refin’d.

“ Do you at Mehrab’s garden wait our call,

“ And fix a crook impending on the wall.

“ Thus the fair prey, the beauty that you chase,

“ Shall bless you with the radiance of her face.”

The slaves return ; Zal to his tent repairs.

Years pass in one flow night with anxious cares.

Rodahver smil’d.—The slaves present the gift;

“ How did he look ?” with fond impatience swift

Rodahver cry’d ; —“ How was the hero’s strain ? —

“ How compass your design ?” —The female train

Relate the tale. “ Through the surrounding earth,

“ No monarch rules with such distinguish’d worth.

“ Each attribute of beauty round him beams ;

“ Splendid his form, intelligent his themes.

“ Just object of desire ! His eager breast

“ Glows to behold you ; all his soul’s possess

- “ By you alone ; intelligent and wise !
“ Renown'd for strength, and fam'd for radiant eyes !
“ White is his hair, yet flowing to the earth,
“ An equal match for your resplendent birth.
“ We will return, and your bright mandates bear
“ To the young king, the object of your care !”
“ My thoughts are chang'd !” the fair Rodahver cry'd ;
“ Is this the youth nurs'd on a mountain's side ?
“ Is this the old man with his silver hair,
“ Bred by a Semurgh in the fields of air !
“ Is this the blossom that you painted low ?
“ To him my image and my praises glow
“ In your description : 'tis for him that now
“ You teach my maiden heart the am'rous vow.”
She laugh'd, and blush'd ; “ 'Tis well, you may repair
“ To Zal's encampment, and my wish declare.
“ Say, he may come, and view this high-prais'd form ;
“ And say, his love is met by love as warm.
“ Say, heav'n's propitiate to the lover's pray'r ;
“ Let judgement guide, and clos'd is ev'ry care.”

Rodahver

Rodahver active to the garden goes,
A painted garden, where each flow'ret blows ;
Chinese brocades are seen in ev'ry room,
The rubies sparkle, ev'ry rich perfume
Scents the whole air, gay pictures charm the sight,
And flowing goblets yield supreme delight.
Festoons and flow'rs, the lily and the rose,
The cup of gems a radiant lustre throws.
With the fair slaves alone she here remains ;
Each avenue is clos'd ; love solely reigns.
The slave the warrior to the garden leads ;
Rodahver meets him ; in his face she reads
The heart exulting ; " Warrior, hail ! she cry'd ;
" May heav'n propitiate smile ! may fortune glide
" In fav'ring streams ! may thy engaging breast
" Ne'er feel a pang ! for ever, ever blest !
" Weary, perhaps, on foot alone you came,
" Guided by love, by his immortal flame."
Astonish'd at her gracious speech, he gaz'd
At her fine form, which like the sun high blaz'd.

The

The house with jewels glitters in the shade,

Yet still more radiant was the blooming maid.

He thus exclaims : “ Oh ! how those lunar beams

“ Resistless dazzle with celestial streams !

“ Eternal may your stars propitiate shine !

“ Them I have watch'd, and at the awful shrine

“ For you my pray'rs have flow'd in fervent strain ;

“ Thy speech enchants me ; there the graces reign.

“ Say, when again I shall behold those charms,

“ And speak again a lover's fond alarms ? ”

The fairy princess opes her flowing hair,

In ringlets wreathing through the playful air,

As winding serpents, as the lover's snare.

Her smiling dimples heighten ev'ry grace,

And the loose tresses shade the roseate face.

Now hanging o'er the wall, she thus address'd

The wond'ring Zal : “ Bright youth, by fame carest !

“ Take these long tresses in thy royal arm,

“ And let them guide thee safe from all alarm,

“ To

“ To the high terrace.” The young king, amaz’d,
Loft in enchantment, at her beauties gaz’d.
Yet deem’d it strange : “ Ah ! kind and gen’rous maid !”
Brave Zal reply’d, “ by such a fearful aid,
“ Which thee may injure, never can I rise,
“ Or nearer view thy love-inspiring eyes.
“ Never, ah never ! while the sun illumines
“ The circling earth, or while thy beauty blooms,
“ Wou’d I ascend.” He thought upon the scheme
The slave had told : on a projecting beam
He fix’d the hook, and active springs above ;
Rodahver smil’d ; and all the scene was love.
Gracious their clasping hands together twine,
By love inflam’d, devoted to his shrine.
Now they descend, and to the palace move,
Attended by the slave who knew their love.
The gay illuminations gild the scene ;
All was elysium, splendid, yet serene !
Zal more amaz’d, all glowing with desire,
Gaz’d on her eyes, which beam’d celestial fire ;

Her

Her hair, her face, and ev'ry op'ning bloom,
Catch his fond soul, and fix the lover's doom.
In tiffue drest, the sparkling necklace glows,
The bracelet on her hand new beauty throws.
In her small ear the pendant jewels blaze,
And ev'ry gem of variegated rays.
Bright as the various garden of the spring,
Melodious as when nature's songsters sing.
Not even roses on Arabian gales,
Thus scent the air, or fill the passing sails.
On the same couch they sit: on Zal's high head
A crown of rubies and of gems was spread.
With flow'rs diversify'd his ringlets wave,
And his bright form confess'd the warrior brave.
Rodahver blush'd, and in her conscious eye
Blaz'd the fierce rapture, and the am'rous sigh;
On all his charms, his eminence, she gaz'd;
Hung o'er his manly form, and much she prais'd:
She bids him rise; now stung with keen desires,
Their fond embraces speak th' internal fires.

Bliss

Bliss smil'd enchanting, and with rapture warm,
 Around them love diffus'd his brightest charm :
 Thus the fierce lion bounding o'er the deer,
 In playful fondness chafes ev'ry fear.

Zal then exclaims ; " Oh ! thou whose scented hair,
 " Fair maid, with musk perfumes the ambient air,
 " When Munochere our nuptial rites shall know,
 " I fear his anger, and the future woe.
 " That Saum indignant will declare his rage,
 " That death, alas ! must close my early age.
 " Hear, thou bright heav'n ! and hear, ye pow'rs above !
 " No other object shall enjoy my love."

Rodahver thus replied : " Let heav'n attest
 " The same bright purpose of my faithful breast.
 " Though sceptred monarchs at my feet shou'd fall,
 " Their thrones, their splendor, I wou'd scorn them all.
 " My pray'rs to heav'n shall testify my soul,
 " Zal shall my wishes, all my thoughts control.
 " My pray'rs shall soften the illustrious fire,
 " Calm ev'ry thought, and his assent inspire."

Loft was each fenfe, diffolv'd in foft delight,
And love increafes from the gazing fight :
Thus pafs'd the fleeting hours, till the gray dawn
Beheld the fun juft peeping o'er the lawn.
Till from afar the filver tabors play ;
The lovers part ; their penfive fighs difplay
The pang it gave : while tears o'erflow the face,
Their love was pictur'd in the fond embrace.
To the bright orb, “ Intruding light ! ” they cry,
“ Why early fpangle all the morning fky ? ”
“ Why thus our blifs, our happier hours deftroy,
“ And clofe with pain the raptur'd fcenes of joy ? ”
Zal now defcends, and to his tent repairs,
Incertitude no more pervades his cares.
As when from flowing bowls retires the gueft,
Thus on the throne the lover finks to reft.
The martial train attend, and as they view
Their monarch flumb'ring, from the room withdrew.
This Zal perceiving, their return commands,
And thus he, gracious, fpeaks the gen'rous bands :

“ Be

" Be ever blest ! to God our praise be giv'n !
 " To high Omnipotence, the Lord of heav'n !"
 He told the sages all his secret breast,
 And thus his wishes and his thoughts express :
 " Heav'n rules supreme o'er my submissive mind ;
 " Its fears, its hopes, are all to heav'n resign'd.
 " Each day devoted to the God supreme,
 " Obedience to his will my constant theme.
 " Oh, thou who rules the planetary world !
 " The circling globe ! by whom the thunder's hurl'd !
 " Lead my blind judgement with unerring eye,
 " And point the road where truth and goodness lye.
 " This throne is thine ; the rulers of mankind
 " Are emanations of thy mighty mind.
 " From thy command the spring's fair blossoms shoot,
 " And autumn yields the ripe delicious fruit.
 " See the grapes cluster, and the loaded tree
 " Luxuriant hang from thy divine decree.
 " See youth elate with blooming image rise ;
 " See age dejected wipe the sorrowing eyes.

- “ Thy just injunctions sway this mortal ball ;
 “ The ant without thy order cannot crawl.
 “ When first the wide creation burst in birth,
 “ He fram’d th’ essentials for to rule the earth.
 “ Nature in pairs range o’er the new-form’d state,
 “ God is alone incomprehensive, great !
 “ No soft affections, and no mortal fires,
 “ The God of nature and of man inspires.
 “ Did not mankind in well-match’d pairs unite,
 “ Soon wou’d lost nature close in endless night.
 “ Each youth in union with some equal maid,
 “ In nuptial pleasures sport along the shade.
 “ If royal birth adorns the blooming fair,
 “ Just is the object of the lover’s care !
 “ Sure ’tis more glorious if my name shou’d live,
 “ And Saum with me to future ages give
 “ A gallant race renown’d ; secure the throne,
 “ And memory with fame our trophies own.
 “ These are my thoughts ; the bright narcissus charms
 “ The blushing rose : I wish her in my arms.

“ ’Tis

“ 'Tis Mehrab's daughter taught my heart to glow ;

“ With love, with fondest love, these eyes o'erflow.

“ Oh ! speak the just recesses of your breast !

“ For much I mourn'd ere I my soul confess.

“ In Mehrab's palace beams the god of day,

“ This land, my planet ! this, my starry way !

“ What will Saum say ? and what the king of kings ?

“ And yet from love alone true glory springs.

“ All faiths, all sects, in nuptial bands unite ;

“ And no deception dims the lucid light.

“ Speak, sages, speak ! your sentiments declare !”

The sages' silence mark'd their anxious care ;

Of Zohak's race ! they dread the royal ire,

The high resentment of the angry fire !

Not one wou'd speak, or tell the princely youth.

The clearest dictates of immortal truth.

That thus the man of merit shou'd not wed,

Or lead the line of Zohak to his bed.

Indignant Zal, provok'd, the silence broke,

Adopts a different voice, and thus he spoke :

“ I know

- “ I know your reverence for my kingly fire ;
“ Your fears alone contemptuous thoughts inspire.
“ Those that are vile, however high or great,
“ Will be adjudg’d, and by the hand of fate.
“ Clear my delirium, guide me through the wave,
“ Such gifts are thine as never monarch gave.”

The sages answer, “ Ev’ry bliss be thine,

- “ We are the slaves of thy illustrious line.
“ From this event a just amazement springs,
“ Not such the custom of imperial kings.
“ ’Tis true, that females of conspicuous birth
“ Can ne’er degrade the rulers of the earth.
“ Yet Mehrab’s daughter, of the dragon race,
“ Suits not thy birth, unfit for thy embrace:
“ Although he rules these plains ! and yet, my lord,
“ Shou’d with thy wish the king of kings accord,
“ Then with the maiden may thy fates unite,
“ And ev’ry day increase in fond delight.
“ To Saum the wishes of thy breast impart,
“ Whate’er seems worthy to thy sapient heart.

“ To

- “ To the high king be all thy hopes confest,
“ ’Tis his consent alone can make you blest.”
Zal calls the writer, dictates to his fire,
“ All health, all joy, whatever you require,
“ May they be thine ! to heav’n I bend my knee,
“ Submits I bow to the divine decree ;
“ To whom we owe our life, our mortal breath,
“ Who guides our actions, and decrees our death.
“ To martial Saum, whom conquest crowns with fame,
“ Swift as the wind who through the battle’s flame
“ Triumphant rides ; upon whose awful head
“ The rich tiara and the crown is spread ;
“ Whose excellence the truly great inspires,
“ Whose eminence high beams with gen’rous fires.
“ Did time e’er give thy equal in the field ?
“ No future age so brave a king will yield.
“ To thee with awe I bend ; with less’ning ray
“ On thee suspended all my prospects lay.
“ Erst you beheld me prostrate on the earth ;
“ Unfav’ring fortune mark’d my early birth !

“ While

- " While peace around you spreads her radiant charms,
 " To hills the Semurgh bore me in her arms.
 " The beast of prey the only milk I knew,
 " And all my hopes were in the Semurgh's view :
 " Sad was my heart, and yellow was the hue
 " Of my wan cheeks : when number'd with her young,
 " 'Twas on her prey my hopes of life were hung.
 " The mountain was the only scene I saw,
 " Scorch'd by the winds, and left to nature's law.
 " The Semurgh told me, I was Saum's high heir ;
 " Yet Saum on thrones, a stranger to my care !
 " While I in dens, far from my native clime,
 " Was doom'd to stay, unconscious of a crime.
 " In this the fates their certain will disclose.
 " The high award what mortal can oppose ?
 " Or who dispel the cloud our God commands ?
 " E'en the fierce warrior of selected bands,
 " At whose loud voice the frighten'd lion starts,
 " Who dares the battle with unerring darts,

" Sinks

- " Sinks at his nod ; e'en though as anvils strong
 " His harden'd teeth, the terror of the throng !
 " How my heart's torn, consum'd by glowing fires ;
 " The tale, a secret, thy consent requires.
 " Not the fierce dragon burns with higher flame,
 " Though much I fear my royal father's blame :
 " For Mehrab's daughter all my passions glow,
 " Love fires my mind, and tears my face o'erflow.
 " Rest flies my couch, Rodahver fills the theme,
 " These eyes still deluge an eternal stream !
 " So much I sorrow all the day and night,
 " Mankind in sympathy for me unite.
 " Though thus depress'd, thy orders I obey,
 " Say thy commands, and wipe my tears away.
 " Erst you declar'd my wishes shou'd be thine,
 " Do not thy word, thy promises resign :
 " By our own rites be fair Rodahver mine.
 " When quitting Elburs was thy honour pledg'd,
 " For non-compliance be no cause alledg'd."

Like Arzur Gershasp, he an envoy sends
To martial Saum, on whom his fate depends.——
“ Make no delay.”——The envoy urg’d his course
With rapid speed, upon the fleetest horse.
When near Kergerferan the envoy came,
The warrior saw him as he chas’d the game,
The timid panther bounding o’er the hill,
Flying the horsemen and the hunters’ skill.
“ A warrior from Kabul !” the hero cries ;
“ His horse from Zabul, from the eastern skies.
“ From Zal he bends his way ; hear what he brings
“ From Zal, from Iran, to the king of kings.”
The horseman nearer came, and in his hand
The letter of his chief from Zabul’s land.
To heav’n he fervent pray’d. The letter gave,
And spoke the mandates of the warrior brave.
Saum reads the letter, from the mountain bends,
Angry, and silent ; various passion rends
His mind indignant ; “ Other thoughts,” he cried,
“ Are worthy of a prince to kings allied.

“ Such

“ Such deeds and such affections are preferr’d,

“ Such worthy the disciple of a bird.”

He fought his tent, reflecting on the past ;

“ Shou’d my denial all his wishes blast,

“ And shou’d he negative the wise decree,

“ I pledg’d my faith, inviolable plea !

“ Shou’d I accord, what fame or honours spring

“ From the fell daughter of a dæmon king,

“ And him, my son, nurs’d by a Semurgh’s care.”

The warrior sunk to rest in sad despair.

He thought that heav’n, in some prophetic dream,

Would clear his thoughts, discordant to the scheme.

When from his couch he rose, he calls the sage,

And wise astronomers in nature’s page.

“ Ye sages, say th’ event of Zal’s demand ;

“ Say, can two sects unite in nuptial band ?

“ For fire and water will the union blend,

“ While all the earth the former wars will rend

“ Of Feredoon and Zohak ; it is thine

“ The stars to study, the immortal sign :

“ There read the destiny, explore the fate,
“ Of warlike Zal; and these to me relate.”
For many a day they watch the starry heav’n,
And pleas’d, his fate were to their studies giv’n.
The glorious prospect charms their swelling breast;
To Saum they came, and thus their thoughts exprest:
“ Propitiate heav’n, Oh! lion of war!
“ Smiles on the union with the Kabul star.
“ From their embrace an elephant will rise,
“ Great, gallant, wise, protected by the skies!
“ The world his foot-stool, and his crown a cloud
“ O’er mighty monarchs. His atchievements, loud
“ As the big tempest, will expel the foe;
“ And vice chastise by one triumphant blow.
“ O’er all the earth his victor arms will shine,
“ To him Kergerferan her pow’rs resign.
“ To him Mazinderan submissive yields,
“ And Turan will behold her ravag’d fields.
“ While Iran smiles to view her foes o’erthrown,
“ And peace with gentle sway adorns her throne.

“ The

“ The hopes of Iran center in his birth,
“ And Saum will joy with all the wond’ring earth.
“ When in the field he spurs his fiery horse,
“ Prostrate the lion feels his conquering force,
“ Thy own domains, exulting, will behold
“ The future glories of thy race unfold.”

When Saum in rapture heard the heav’n-taught lore,
His heart approves what it abhorr’d before.

Of gold and silver many gifts bestow’d,

And joy arose whence previous sorrow flow’d.

He call’d the envoy, and with converse gay,

Bids him to Zal his happier thought display.

“ I knew not how his wishes cou’d succeed,

“ Although I pledg’d consent to ev’ry need.

“ Yet no deception, in the man of worth,

“ Can honour lure to derogate his birth.

“ I march to Iran, wait the king’s commands.

“ Haste, and return to Mehrab’s fertile lands.”

The king dismiss’d him, royal gifts bestow’d ;

He speeds to Duffan, who with transport glow’d.

He

He sends the letter by the maiden's care,
 Who quickly gives it to the moony fair.
 Told all the lover's message. Joy supreme
 Brightens Rodahver at the raptur'd theme.
 Rich gifts, a silver chain, embroider'd vest,
 The transport of the princely maid confest !
 Wreaths for the head, and ornaments so gay
 (No setting to be seen) the gems display.
 The wreaths the labour of the loom conceals,
 And only burnish'd gold its blaze reveals.
 Two brilliant rings that sparkle from afar,
 Dazzle the light, and each a radiant star.
 Many a tender strain her soul express,
 The glow of rapture in a lover's breast !
 The maid descending, is by Scendocht spy'd ;
 " Whence do you come ? " the queen impetuous cry'd.
 Much she revolv'd, while o'er the maiden's face
 The juniper bespeaks some sad disgrace.
 She kiss'd the ground ; when Scendocht stern pursu'd :
 " Thou slave, ill fac'd ! thy steps I oft have view'd,

" Pass

“ Pass through this mansion, and, with artful guile,

“ Unheeded me, as conscious of your wile.

“ Mark, and reply ; for here you shall remain,

“ Till clear’d my doubts by just and obvious strain.”

The maid replies ; “ A vender do I roam,

“ And bring for sale to ev’ry stately dome

“ Rich gems ; embroider’d vestments do I bring,

“ Such as may suit the offspring of a king :

“ Rodahver order’d gems ; for her I bring

“ The splendid wreaths, and the imperial ring.”

“ These let me see,” the doubtful queen reply’d,

“ To clear my scruples.” Quick the maiden cry’d,

“ I gave them to Rodahver, who requires

“ More gems, more dress ; whatever she desires,

“ Another time I bring, a future day,

“ For these my jewels will the princess pay.”

Scendocht, indignant at the artful guile,

Ey’d ev’ry ring, and clearly saw the wile.

These gems herself had to her daughter giv’n ;

To the low ground the faithful slave is driv’n ;

There

There bound in chains ; the queen, inflam'd with ire,

Calls for her daughter, all her soul on fire !

While o'er the roses of Rodahver's face,

The tears fast flow'd, as conscious of disgrace.

Whom thus the queen address : “ Illustrious maid !

“ Lost in oblivion, do thy honours fade !

“ Say, are such actions worthy of your birth ?

“ No secret now, but known to all the earth :

“ Let all thy soul to Scendocht be reveal'd,

“ For whom these rings, and wreath, these gems conceal'd ?

“ This royal mansion, our Arabian blaze,

“ Sinks by such actions with diminish'd rays,

“ Ne'er was a daughter nurs'd with fonder care,

“ Though now our lustre fleets in empty air.”

Rodahver blushing, from her radiant eyes

The flowing tears distil the purple dyes,

“ Oh ! wife and tender parent,” she replies,

“ The joys of life are like the sportsman's prey,

“ Just as the timid deer pursues her way ;

“ Now

" Now o'er the plain exulting she beholds
 " The dogs at distance chace her winding folds ;
 " Till tir'd, at length her weary feet no more
 " Support her weight, she welters in her gore.
 " Had my fond mother never borne the child,
 " No joy had been my lot, no sorrows wild.
 " The martial Dustan leaves our Kabul's plains :
 " His lustre charms me, here his image reigns.
 " The world, a dungeon ! yields me no delight ;
 " And grief corrodes me or by day or night.
 " Life is a sorrow when my Zal's away ;
 " One hair more valu'd, and more charms display,
 " Than all mankind cou'd yield : for hand in hand
 " We solemn pledg'd th' indissoluble band.
 " We met, our loves ascended in a flame,
 " But yet no action taught dishonest shame.
 " He sent an envoy to imperial Saum,
 " At first the chief, with indignation warm,
 " Deny'd assent. Then softening, gifts bestow'd ;
 " Consented to the union ; gently flow'd

" His mild compliance as the summer's wave ;
 " This maiden brought it, and the dress I gave."
 Scendocht amaz'd, and in her heart approves
 The gallant object of her daughter's loves.
 " Free from defect is Zal's imperial mind,
 " Great is his fire," the tender queen rejoin'd ;
 " No warrior lives his equal in the field,
 " Renown'd for wisdom, and his virtues yield
 " An excellence pre-eminently great !
 " And yet I fear the Lord of Kabul's state
 " Will burst in storms, and o'er her fertile realm
 " The clouds will hover, and her plains o'erwhelm.
 " He scorns the sect of Saum, the varying race ;
 " And deems your union teeming with disgrace."
 Now Scendocht frees the slave, the maid carest :
 Rodahver's mind serener thoughts imprest.
 Yet still the pensive queen with sorrow saw
 Her lord's fierce passions, and the adverse law.
 The image grieves ; disconsolate she ey'd
 Her beauteous daughter, and in secret sigh'd.

Wasted by grief, no more the roses blow ;

She fought the chief, nor cou'd conceal her woe.

Soon as the warrior saw the drooping flow'r,

As roses with'ring in the hostile show'r,

“ Say,” he exclaims, “ what motive of despair

“ Corrodes the blooming object of my care ?”

Scendocht replies ; “ 'Tis thought corrodes my breast

“ By sad anxiety my soul's possesst.

“ From these vast treasures, and these fertile plains,

“ These fine Arabian steeds, these high domains,

“ These flow'ry gardens, and these lofty domes,

“ These friends august, this martial train that roams

“ Obedient to your will, these flow'ry meads,

“ Fit feat of kings ! and fam'd for gen'rous deeds !

“ These charms of nature, beauties of the mind,

“ These dazzling splendors, eminent, refin'd !

“ All sink in endless night ; 'tis vain to grieve ;

“ Give them to foes, let mem'ry only live.

“ Rodahver is the cause ; and late she rose

“ The tree, the antidote, for all my woes,

" This tree I guarded, water'd it with care,
 " Crown'd it with laurels ; Kabul's brightest heir !
 " Now raidant rising, all its blossoms bloom,
 " Now sink to nothing in the fatal doom.
 " This is the picture of my anxious breast,
 " Where shall I seek repose ? where gently rest ?"

Mehrab replies ; " Such is the chain of things,
 " Wisdom will fear the world's uncertain springs.
 " Mortality in quick succession runs ;
 " Fate sports with fortune through revolving suns.
 " Let grief no more thy pensive mind oppress ;
 " Revere Omnipotence, its dictates bless."

This speech how varying from th' internal storm
 That shakes his soul, and agitates his form !

" How shall we act ?" the beauteous queen replies ;
 " New is the business, and awakes my sighs.
 " Yet still the parents view their budding fruit,
 " As the old tree regards the tender shoot.
 " The motive of my grief, the cause of woe,
 " Mehrab perceives not ; Mehrab does not know ;

" (O'er

“ (O’er her fine form the flowing tears proclaim
“ The grief-struck mind, and desolated frame.)
“ Thus fate revolves, and in the private hour,
“ Zal and Rodahver own’d love’s fatal pow’r.
“ Her heart, inflam’d, demands the cautious hand ;
“ Love fires her soul ; love lights the burning brand !
“ To different thoughts in vain my counsel’s prest ;
“ Pale are the roses, pensive is her breast.”

This Mehrab hearing, with resentment rose ;
Drew his broad sabre, trembling as he glows :
Pale was his face, and breathless as he stood ;
Forebodings dire of future scenes of blood ;
“ Rodahver dies !” the furious prince exclaims ;
Pale Scendocht (trembling at his furious flames,
And the wild passion, full of dire alarms,)
Fell at his feet, and clasp’d them in her arms.
“ Oh ! stop the fatal word !” the queen rejoins ;
“ The chief to wisdom still his rage resigns.
“ Oh ! hear the counsel thy inferior dares
“ To give her warrior ; object of her cares ;

“ Attentive

“ Attentive hear ! and then let wisdom guide.

“ May wisdom walk triumphant by her side !”

Mehrab indignant dash'd her to the ground ;

His rage in frenzy breaks o'er ev'ry bound :

Thus the mad elephant, with fury stung,

O'er all the fields with dreadful anger sprung.

“ My ancestors,” he spoke, “ did oft advise

“ The arm of death, shou'd e'er a daughter rise.

“ I never injur'd, ne'er expell'd these plains :

“ This my reward ! she all my glory stains !

“ Whene'er the child the parent's will denies,

“ The brave will spurn it, or no longer prize.

“ When the young leopard feels his prowess grow,

“ He burns for action with impetuous glow :

“ Thus did his dam ; and yet, with gen'rous art,

“ He seeks for foreign prey, nor wounds the parent heart.

“ The pious child with just obedience waits,

“ Nor seeks the downfall of a father's states.

“ Sorrow and shame united press my mind ;

“ Why then restrain me ? why my fury bind ?

“ Shou'd

- “ Shou’d Saum and Munochere unite in arms,
 “ Kabul will tremble at the war’s alarms.
 “ Her plains a desert.” Scendocht thus rejoin’d;
 “ Oh ! lower not, my lord, thy mighty mind;
 “ By such wild grief : shall Saum the warrior hear
 “ That Kabul’s lord e’er knew the timid fear?
 “ There is no cause, no discord will prevail,
 “ He quits Kergerferan, and knows the tale.”
 Mehrab replies : “ No visions can affright :
 “ Thou beauteous rival of the orb of night !
 “ I know them great, superior in command;
 “ Their force I fear not, nor their warlike band.
 “ Exempt from care by this Rodahver’s death,
 “ All sorrow ceases with her parting breath.
 “ I know that Zal will eminently shine,
 “ The gallant heir of Saum’s heroic line !
 “ I know his soul.” The tott’ring queen reply’d,
 “ To no deceit was e’er my soul ally’d.
 “ Thy loss is mine, thy ev’ry sorrow mine,
 “ This bursting heart wou’d ev’ry wish resign

“ To

- " To pleasure thee ; from this my sorrow rose ;
 " From this the tumult in my bosom flows :
 " Various is fate, the source of pain or joy !
 " Then wise reflection shou'd our thoughts employ.
 " Great Feredoon approved th' Arabian band,
 " Though diff'rent sects compos'd the foreign land,
 " Dustan is eminent, of royal birth ;
 " Admir'd and prais'd by all the circling earth.
 " Fire, water, earth, and air, the world control ;
 " The elements unite one beauteous whole !
 " This union breathes destruction to thy foes ;
 (This Mehrab hears, yet still with anger glows.)
 " Let, Oh renown'd ! my darling daughter rest
 " Safe in these arms, and in a mother's breast.
 " Thy rage I dread, and anxiously desire
 " Thy royal word, to save her from thy ire.
 " In her the gardens of elysium bloom,
 " And Kabul's childless in her fatal doom.
 " Oh ! solemn pledge th' inviolable test !
 " Oh ! chafe this sad resentment from your breast !"

The

The fame-exploring warrior solemn swore,
That passion irritates his mind no more.
“ The King of kings,” the Kabul warrior cries,
“ The action wou’d avenge.” The radiant eyes
Of Scendocht brighten ; to the earth she bows,
And seeks her daughter, full of grateful vows.
Her face appear’d the radiant God of light,
Breaking resistless through the mists of night.
“ The lion couches,” to the maid she cry’d ;
“ No more contention battles by his side.
“ Go to thy fire in plain and simple dress,
“ Lament the past, his mild decree confess.” —
“ Why thus in simple dress ?” the fair rejoins ;
“ Love to my breast the son of Saum entwines.
“ And why conceal what all the public know ?
“ Jewels are baubles, an external show !”
Rodahver seeks the king ; the orient light
Not with more brilliance charms the gazing sight.
Amaz’d the king beholds the dazzling maid ;
(To heav’n his eyes implore celestial aid)

She bloom'd the garden of elysian plains,
As when in spring the sun refulgent reigns.
All void of wisdom spoke the kingly fire;
“ Thus does a dæmon fairy charms inspire,
“ A Khietan shou'd be driven to distant scenes,
“ Or left to perish on the marshy greens.”
Rodahver, silent and confus'd with shame,
Look'd on the ground, while terror shook her frame.
With indignation prest fierce Mehrab stood;
Rage fir'd his breast, and led his thoughts to blood:
Thus in the stream the water-dragon foams,
His colour redd'ning to and fro he roams;
Then quits the scene. 'Twas heav'n's protecting hand
That fav'd the blooming maid, and Kabul's land.
Fame spreads her wing, to Munochere relates
That Zal and Mehrab join in nuptial states.
From this unequal, this discordant band,
His care high blazes for Irania's strand.
Thus to the sages he his thoughts exprest:
“ To guard mankind's the duty of my breast:

I Though

“ Though lions, leopards, shook the ivory throne,
“ I rose to greatness, and here reign alone.
“ Fierce Zohak fell by Feredoon the great :
“ His line exalted may destroy the state.
“ With Zalzer, glorious in th’ embattl’d fight !
“ Shou’d Mehrab’s daughter join the nuptial rite,
“ The sharpen’d steel will from the scabbard fly,
“ And dæmon heroes shake th’ Iranian sky.
“ The venom will its antidote conceal,
“ And spread the poison, the destructive steel ;
“ For shou’d their sons attend the mother’s lore,
“ Spread desolation, Iran lay in gore,
“ Soon will the father, by ambition led,
“ His terrors join, and war through Iran spread.”
To heav’n the sages offer up their pray’rs,
And praise the monarch for his patriot cares :
Then spoke ; “ Superior wisdom guides your mind,
“ To thee the rays of judgement are assign’d :
“ The man of wisdom soars to heav’nly fame ;
“ Who foils the dragon gains a glorious name.”

The king of kings upon the theme reflects;
And fears the discord of their different sects.
Commands his son to seek the camp of Saum,
And bids him question why he left the storm
Of warring nations? bids him to attend
The royal presence, and imperial friend.
Nooder departs; and Saum with all his train
Meets the imperial heir on Iran's plain:
Who tells the message of the king of kings,
The dubious thoughts, and fate's uncertain springs.
"Thy royal father," thus the chief address;
"Will tune to harmony my faithful breast."
The table spread, the circling bowl invites;
The wars of Munochere the chief recites.
While Nooder and the heroes praise the strain,
Till the gray dawn beheld the solar reign.
The tabors play; Saum mounts his fiery steed:
To Munochere they march with rapid speed.
This the king hears, prepares th' imperial throne,
The wide, extended plains refulgent shone.

In

In arms and armour high the warriors blaze ;
A train immense ! who sing the hero's praise.
Loud found the drums, the bounding Arabs neigh,
The elephants majestic stalk their way.
Here treasure flows; here moves the waving ban,
Here shouts of soldiers, here each warlike clan :
Thus the loud murmurs of the liquid plain
Sound through the waves, and rustle o'er the main.
As he approach'd, the King of kings arose :
A crown of rubies glitt'ring on his brows !
On ivory thron'd the chief of Zeistan sat,
By royal order near the chair of state.
The king his merit and his praise resounds :
Much of the warriors, and the hostile wounds
Kergerferan had felt. " What danger past ?
" The dæmons of Mazinderan o'ercast !"
The chief reply'd ; " May peace on thee bestow
" Her radiant charms, triumphant o'er the foe !
" To the high city of the dæmon rite
" We fearless march'd ; those lions in the fight,

“ More

- “ More daring far than our Arabian horse,
 “ Than Iran’s warriors fiercer in the course.
 “ These Sugfer monsters, elephants in war !
 “ Knew our approach, seem’d horrid from afar.
 “ All counsel scorning, through their city flies
 “ Discordant tumult, reaching to the skies.
 “ Revolving clouds of dust obscur’d the light ;
 “ All nature shudder’d at the monster’s fight.
 “ Intrepid now they dare us to the fray,
 “ Though darken’d ether shrouds the direful day.
 “ Now they attack, their onset now we dare ;
 “ I ne’er beheld such desolating war !
 “ The weapons clash’d, now clos’d is shield to shield,
 “ Till conquest made us masters of the field.
 “ Death levell’d all in one destructive blow ;
 “ I shew’d no mercy to the barb’rous foe.
 “ A scene of terror ! when the furious arms
 “ Of Zohak’s grandson spread his dire alarms,
 “ As the fierce wolf the dæmon warrior came ;
 “ War was his sport, and Kakou was his name :

Tall

- “ Tall and erect, and graceful was his form,
“ Fierce and intrepid in the warlike storm.
“ Not ants more num’rous creep the ground along,
“ Or locusts flying, an unnumber’d throng !
“ Than this vast army cov’ring all the West ;
“ Nor ants nor locusts cou’d explore their nest.
“ Then when the tumult rose, our warriors pale,
“ Amaz’d in terror, all their senses fail.
“ I left the ranks ; I singly dar’d their force,
“ And mow’d intrepid through the dæmon’s course.
“ I forc’d my way ; dire desolation rose,
“ And terror spread e’en o’er the daring foes.
“ As circling mills with quick and rapid whirl
“ Grind the crush’d grain, the awe-struck foe I hurl.
“ This cheers our army ; this new force inspires ;
“ Kindling with rage they press with dreadful fires.
“ When Kakou heard my voice, quick on he prest,
“ Rais’d his life-sporting sabre to my breast.
“ When near his elephant I urg’d my course,
“ His noose he darted with resistless force :

“ ’Twas

- “ 'Twas such a noose not e'en the mountain's height,
“ Cou'd stand unmov'd the sling-impelling might.
“ Then when I saw it whizzing through the air,
“ I seiz'd the Kian bow; with well-aim'd care,
“ The arrow-pointed steel I dext'rous drew:
“ While through the air the winged arrow flew.
“ I spurr'd my bounding steed, as through the grove
“ The mounting flames ascend and blaze above.
“ I thought the well-aim'd reed had pierc'd his brain;
“ When the mad elephant along the plain
“ Came with his Indian sabre in his hand,
“ And rush'd impetuous as the fiery brand.
“ Onward he rapid prefs'd his furious steed;
“ Calmly I waited, till his eager speed
“ To close encounter urg'd the mighty force;
“ When to his side I drove my bounding horse.
“ I seiz'd his girdle, pois'd him in the air,
“ And dash'd him down, all sinking with despair!
“ Then with a lion's strength my Indian blade
“ Deep in the thorax of the dæmon laid.

Breathless

“ Breathless he sunk : his frighten’d army fled ;
“ And hills and deserts hide their conquer’d head.
“ Twelve thousand horse and foot were sav’d from fate ;
“ Three hundred thousand came in dreadful state. —
“ Against thy fortunes, thy triumphant worth,
“ Vain were the efforts of the circling earth.”

Thus spoke the chief ; the gracious speech delights,
And elevates the mind to future fights.

Wine charms the warrior, music floats in air ;

The universe appears serenely fair.

Till night had clos’d her dark and silent gate,

And the sun charms the universal state ;

The gorgeous palace doors were open’d wide,

And Saum attended by the monarch’s side ;

Bowing submissive to th’ unequal’d king ;

While his heart beat to speak the secret spring,

The wishes of Rodahver, and his son :

But ere he cou’d proceed the king begun :

“ Reflection guide thee ! to yon Indian plain

“ March with your forces, with the chosen train ;

“ There level Mehrab’s cities, and his race ;
“ Let him not live to spread the dire disgrace !
“ The dragon’s line ! for each revolving day
“ New tumults rise from this demoniac fray.
“ Let all mankind submissively unite,
“ And union rise from this illustrious fight.
“ His race, his domes, his nobles, perish all !
“ To free mankind let Zohak’s lineage fall !”
Thus spoke the monarch ; his indignant eye
Denied to anxious Saum the wish’d reply ;
But this, “ Obedience follows to your will,
“ Thy dictates ’tis my duty to fulfil.
He kiss’d the throne, the king, the royal seal :
Then fought his palace : and with eager zeal
His warlike armies on their leader wait ;
With bounding horses, and with martial state.
With rapid bound the tale to Kabul flies ;
Mehrab astonish’d, Dustan greatly sighs ;
Through Kabul the discordant tumult rose ;
And Mehrab’s palace is the scene of woes.

Hope fled from Mehrab; Scendocht sunk in tears;

Rodahver, picture of corroding fears!

Zal now commands his ornamented steed;

And thus exclaims; "Fair Kabul shall not bleed!

"This dragon warrior shall not waste her field!

"First he shall perish ere the lance he wield!"

Thus furious he departs; yet is his breast

Now torn by duty, now by passion prest.

Fame tells the hero of his son's despair,

His march indignant, and his anxious care.

The ban of Feredoon the chief prepares;

The beating tymbals sound the martial airs.

He marches with his train, the colours fly,

Streak'd with the yellow, red, and violet die.

When Saum beheld the gallant youth from far,

He urges on his steed, renown'd in war!

When Dustan saw his fire, he quits the horse;

His nobles all alight; he bends his course

To martial Saum. Great Zalzer rose in might,

The tree of gold upon the mountain height.

The nobles all to Zal lamenting came,

“ Provok’d is Saum, Oh ! do not raise the flame !

“ But with submission mitigate his rage.”——

“ No fear of this,” he spoke, “ my thoughts engage.

“ Life has no charms ; say, wou’d the gen’rous fire,

“ (If wise reflection calms the rising fire ;)

“ Force from these eyes th’ unwilling tear to flow ?

“ If anger raises the indignant glow,

“ I came in person to disclose my soul ;

“ Though warm in love, submissive to control.”

Now Saum, alighting, calls his warrior son,

Who, bending to the carpet, thus begun :

“ To Saum each blessing, to the warrior brave ;

“ My mind still floats on fortune’s adverse wave.

“ Blest be thy days ! by justice ever crown’d !

“ Fam’d in the course ! in fighting fields renown’d !

“ Soft is the diamond to thy polish’d blade ;

“ And when in war thy mighty arm’s display’d,

“ (In fight resistless as the hand of fate)

“ Nations subdu’d weep o’er their drooping state.

“ When

“ When terrible in war you spread your arms,
“ E’en destiny will yield to dire alarms.
“ No more the earth, in this refulgent age,
“ Dreads the wild fury of the lion’s rage.
“ The grateful world still owns thy equal sway;
“ From thee their fortunes, and the tranquil day.
“ I only am excluded. Yet to thee
“ I owe my birth. Though from that lofty tree,
“ The poor disciple of a bird I rose,
“ Unknown in camps: unconscious why these woes
“ Have mark’d my early life; and if my fire,
“ The warlike Saum, and to his line aspire
“ My lofty thoughts, and he beheld my birth.
“ The tale well known through all the circling earth!
“ How he expell’d me, left me on a rock,
“ No cradle shelter’d from th’ impending shock.
“ No gardens e’er I saw, no joys I knew;
“ No earthly things presented to my view;
“ No soothing tendernefs, no soft repose,
“ No parent’s tears were sprinkled o’er my woes.

“ You

- “ You taught my mother all a mother’s care,
“ And made her the sad victim of despair.
“ If black or white, what war is there with heav’n?
“ ’Twas heav’n ordain’d it, by its will ’twas giv’n;
“ Heav’n saw, and pitied the young sufferer’s pains,
“ Gave him to life, and grac’d his youthful strains.
“ The chief of Kabul has endear’d my breast;
“ Enthron’d I sit, by your commands imprest.
“ The sword I wave, with justice here I reign;
“ And spread my mandates o’er this fertile plain.
“ If still provok’d, behold me at your feet;
“ I came in person, fought no mean retreat.
“ I bring before you the wide branching shoot
“ Sow’d with thy hand, now full of clust’ring fruit.
“ Was it for this that conquest crown’d your arms,
“ And fill’d Mazinderan with dire alarms?
“ Was it for this Kergerferan beheld
“ Her dæmons conquer’d, and her cities fell’d?
“ Here fix the pointed steel, lo! here I stand;
“ Let proud injustice light the vengeful brand.

“ Speak

- " Speak not of Kabul, for obedient spring
 " Mehrab and Kabul to Zeistania's king.
 " Say, what offence? or from what motives rise
 " This indignation to these eastern skies?
 " Late you declar'd that glory spread my fame,
 " That this affair wou'd aggrandize my name,
 " That thy assent my fondest hope shou'd charm;
 " Mine be the loss, and mine the future harm."
 Saum heard attentive, thus benignant spoke;
 " Just are thy words! to truth's illustrious yoke
 " The monarch bends! from thee, bright youth! my name
 " Shall rise immortal in the list of fame.
 " And may the future ev'ry anxious care
 " Far from your mind, and from Rodahyer bear.
 " From me you claim assent to your desires,
 " To me you came, all full of gen'rous fires.
 " Do not precipitate thy ardent breast,
 " I will accelerate thy just request.
 " I write the king, and you shall bear the line,
 " When he beholds how vast thy glories shine,

" Thy

- “ Thy air accomplish’d, with averted eye
 “ He will not give th’ unfav’ring reply.
 “ In strains persuasive I’ll address the king,
 “ Lead him to justice, to her lucid spring.
 “ If in his mind the stream of friendship flows,
 “ He will not Saum and Zalzer’s wish oppose.
 “ The warlike lion, monarch of the field !
 “ Will not his prowess delegated yield.”
 Saum dictates thus ; “ To God, eternal praise !
 “ Who fills all space in one celestial blaze !
 “ Who is, and ever will be, whose high will
 “ Gives earthly splendor, and each mortal ill.
 “ Existent, non-existent ; in his mind
 “ (Filling all life, and to no space confin’d.)
 “ ’Tis nature only lives. To him alone
 “ The revolutions of the stars are known.
 “ Saturn, the sun, the planetary states,
 “ And moon resplendent, ’tis his nod creates.
 “ From heav’n to Munochere my ardent pray’r,
 “ Entreats the close of ev’ry mortal care.

“ To

- “ To Munochere, who, victor in the field,
“ No warrior dares, or battles but to yield.
“ Thus the quick poison darting through the veins,
“ No antidote the spring of life sustains.
“ 'Midst thronging legions, thou, the lamp of night,
“ Spread thy refulgent beams and awful light.
“ The glorious ban of Feredoon is thine,
“ The furious leopard flies thy martial line.
“ Thy soul the sword and hostile lances charm,
“ And cities conquer'd fall with dire alarm.
“ Yet still benevolent thy glories blaze,
“ And mountains tremble at the darting rays
“ Of thy bright conq'ring steel; as when the ground
“ (Torn by the pawing horse, and with the sound
“ Of neighing steeds, alarm'd, all trembling yields)
“ Views thrown in air the herbage of the fields.
“ See at one spring the wolf and lambkin drink,
“ And sport together on the wat'ry brink.
“ Though time has silver'd o'er my aged hairs,
“ I mount my horse, and wing thy martial cares:

- “ And still devoted bind my girdle round,
“ Still active in the field, and still renown’d.
“ I spring in arms upon my bounding horse,
“ And guide the fiery stallion to the course.
“ No mortal e’er my furious steed cou’d rein,
“ Or lead intrepid o’er the hostile plain.
“ The fierce Mazinderan, her warlike race
“ I led in triumph, cover’d with disgrace.
“ Were I not active, desolating trains
“ Had mark’d with blood Irania’s rich domains.
“ The winding serpent once spread wide dismay,
“ Stretching from town to town his horrid way.
“ High as the mountain, at whose hideous fight
“ Hope fled the world, and set in endless night.
“ No bird cou’d safely wing the ærial sky,
“ No beast cou’d move. The kergesh darting high,
“ Sunk at his breath; e’en the interior ground
“ Foam’d at his motion, trembling at the sound.
“ The water dragon frighten’d fell his prey,
“ And the black eagle droop’d with sad dismay.

“ Mankind

- “ Mankind with terror saw whole cities fall,
“ And the world yielded to the serpent's call.
“ When this I knew, I felt the hero's glow,
“ God gave me force to dare the serpent foe :
“ In his high name my girdle on I bound,
“ Sprung on my horse, nor fear'd the hostile wound.
“ Now on my saddle blaz'd my cow-grav'd blade,
“ My bow and arrows o'er my arms were laid.
“ With rapid speed, as water-dragons fierce,
“ I lance my javelin and my arrows pierce.
“ The crowds beheld me all appall'd and low,
“ And thought fate certain from the dreadful foe.
“ When near I came, and saw the monstrous fight,
“ Rising terrific as a mountain's height.
“ While o'er the ground far winds his circling mane,
“ As toils to catch ; the sure, the mortal bane !
“ As the black tree, when issuing from its veins
“ A mortal juice ; thus, with malignant stains,
“ Hoarse sounds his voice, while stagnate on his lips
“ Hangs the dark foam, which deadliest venom dips.

“ When his blood-darting eye beheld me near,
“ He roar’d indignant, and I wav’d my spear.
“ I thought, O! king! emitting from his frame,
“ Around there issu’d pestilential flame.
“ As the smooth surface of a summer’s stream,
“ Nature was hush’d; I heard no distant theme.
“ Like a black cloud his dreadful foam arose,
“ The wide earth trembled while his nostril blows.
“ The world all shook as when the dreadful roars
“ Of seas contending rush on China’s shores.
“ I rais’d my voice, and with a lion’s sound,
“ As suits a warrior, dar’d him to the ground.
“ Steel-pointed arrows from my bow I drew,
“ Aim’d the unerring shaft, it swiftly flew,
“ Tearing his hair, and, passing through his throat,
“ Lodg’d in his brain, and life seem’d all afloat.
“ Another follows, when his venom’d tongue,
“ Foaming with blood, and deadliest poison hung;
“ Another piercing through the throat, once more
“ Laid him in anguish, welt’ring in his gore.

“ He

- “ He writh’d his body, when I rais’d my steel,
“ Spurr’d my fierce courser ; heav’n applauds my zeal !
“ The cow-grav’d sword impels the mortal blow,
“ Like falling mountains fell the serpent foe.
“ His elephantine head now shatter’d lies ;
“ Rapid the poison flows, the monster dies !
“ Such streams of venom all the earth defile :
“ Vast as the flowing of the rapid Nile.
“ Mankind reposes, for the neigh’ring hill,
“ Men, women, and the serpent captives fill.
“ Crowds came to bless me, and the joyful throng
“ Hail’d me, in grateful rapture ! Saum the strong.
“ They gave me gems. When victor from the fray,
“ My steed uncas’d, my arms suspended lay.
“ For years I never saw my native field,
“ The western wars were graven on my shield.
“ Shou’d I repeat each dire demoniac fight,
“ No end wou’d close the letter that I write.
“ I acted as my judgement pointed best,
“ Expell’d the lions from the daring West.

“ And

- “ And when through scenes of war I urg’d my course,
“ The warriors fell the victims of my force !
“ For many a year this saddle was my throne,
“ This horse my country, and my couch this zone.
“ For thee Mazinderan submits her arms,
“ For thee Kergerferan, with dire alarms,
“ I laid in blood ; no thought or wish arose,
“ To view my native realms in soft repose.
“ To see thee blest, victorious on the earth,
“ My only joy to aggrandize thy birth.
“ To Zal deserving of the victor’s shield,
“ I yield my toils and glory in the field.
“ My name will rise : for ne’er the warlike son,
“ His race of honour with such fame begun.
“ For me the world a different scene displays,
“ The days of manhood sink with less’ning rays.
“ No parent ever treated such a boy
“ With such indiff’rence, now my spring of joy !
“ One last request I make to Iran’s lord,
“ My boy will ask it, and do thou accord.

“ Heav’n

- “ Heav’n will approve, without thy high command
“ I have not acted : for the faithful band
“ Still breathe submission. You my promise know,
“ Zal I shall not deceive with outward show.
“ To me he came. To Amul bend thy way,
“ The warrior cries, and leave the hostile fray
“ With Kabul’s chief. If the secluded boy
“ Shou’d feel the influence of transcendant joy,
“ And sees in Kabul the tall cypress move,
“ The fairy blossom ; is it strange to love ?
“ Oh ! frown not on my son ! with grief oppress,
“ Mankind compassionate his anguish’d breast.
“ His early years, unconscious of a crime !
“ Saw pain and sorrow waste his youthful prime.
“ I pledg’d my faith, the monarch heard the strain ;
“ With pungent grief Zal seeks Irania’s plain.
“ Yet when he bows to thy imperial throne,
“ Act as a monarch, wisdom is thy own.
“ In his young veins my hopes of glory spring ;
“ From Saum a thousand pray’rs attend the king.”

He

He gives the letter with his royal hand.

Zal mounts his steed, and seeks th' imperial land;

Loud plays the fife: through Kabul it is known;

War fires its chief, and anger shakes his throne;

Scendocht he calls, and thus indignant cry'd:

“ Rodahver's fate the destinies decide!

“ Vain is reflection! hope no longer springs!

“ I dare not brave the mighty king of kings.

“ To please our Lord, thee and thy daughter fall;

“ 'Tis peace demands it, and the spacious ball.

“ And yet shou'd Saum assemble all his force,

“ What man will dare to meet him on the course?”

When Scendocht heard, she pensively reclin'd;

'Midst various thoughts revolving in her mind

One clear reflection rose: she folds her hands,

And thus address'd the chief of Kabul's lands:

“ Oh! hear a moment! then let judgement guide;

“ If Scendocht ever was her warrior's pride,

“ Oh! let a few short hours to peace be giv'n!

“ This night is pregnant with the will of heav'n.”——

“ Why

“ Why pause ? ” he cry’d, “ short is the gloom of night,
“ Soon will the sun burst forth with fulgent light,
“ Bright as the ruby on the mountain glows,
“ When high Bedeckshan all its lustre shows.” —
“ Then raise thy vengeful arm,” fair Scendocht cries ;
“ The warrior never,” Mehrab stern replies,
“ (Let wisdom circle round the female soul,
“ Still it is female) yields to the control.”
Scendocht rejoins ; “ My thoughts are just and good,
“ Do not precipitate thy hands in blood !
“ Oh ! let me seek the tent of warlike Saum,
“ Soften the hero and avert the storm.
“ Wisdom my guide ! the low’ring prospect clear,
“ And chase the cause, the motive of thy fear:
“ In grief I toil : to me thy treasures yield.” —
“ Take then the keys, to worth I am not steel’d ;
“ But do not grieve. The diadem prepare,
“ Horses and thrones, and slaves, be all thy care.
“ Go to the chief, be eloquence thy guide,
“ That peace may flourish : ” Mehrab thus reply’d.

The queen then spoke ; “ To close our various toils,

“ Compar’d to life what are these gorgeous spoils ?

“ Yet in my absence let Rodahver, free

“ From ev’ry danger, find no foe in thee.

“ For her alone my tears, my sorrows flow ;

“ The spring of all my hopes, and all my woe !

“ Oh ! let this day be sacred to her life,

“ Be free from vengeance, and the mortal strife.

“ From the first day thy solemn pledge I bore,

“ Gave manly counsel ; what cou’d woman more ? ”

Now drest in golden tiffues, jewels bright,

And rubies beaming with a purple light.

Twice fifteen thousand dinars were decreed,

Ten chargers beauteous, of a costly breed,

With fifty slaves whose golden turbans shine,

With thirty horses of Arabian line,

With fixty female slaves whose collars blaze,

Each in her hand a cup of gold displays.

With musk and essence here the ruby glows,

One cup with sweet-meats, one with wine o’erflows.

The

The various gem with forty mantles told,
Inlaid with silver and the purest gold.
Twice fifty Indian blades to fight reveal,
The glitt'ring surface of the polish'd steel.
Twice fifty female camels, yellow hair'd,
Twice fifty males were with the females pair'd.
A throne of jewels worthy of a king,
With collars, bracelets, and the pendant ring.
So bright the jewels beam as when on high,
The starry planets gild the vaulted sky.
Three hundred pictures, rulers of the earth;
Four royal elephants of Indian birth,
Bore the rich gifts; this done, she mounts her horse,
Like Arzur Gerfhasp famous in the course.
Her Grecian helmet tow'rs above the throng;
Swift as the winds her courser bounds along:
She rode majestic to the tents of Saum,
And gave no notice whence her beauteous form.
“ Go, (to the train her voice she thus addrest)
“ And tell the mighty ruler of the West,

“ An envoy from Kabul a message bears
“ To Zabul’s warrior.”——To his tent repairs
A servant of the chief, and tells the king
An envoy from Kabul.——“ The envoy bring,”
Brave Saum replies. Alighting, the fair queen
Majestic enters with an air serene,
Bowing submissive: “ Be thou blest,” she cry’d,
“ And blest the king of kings! the nations’ pride!”
Two miles the presents that she brought for Saum
In order rang’d. In supplicating form
The slaves appear.——“ Why by a female friend
“ Does Kabul’s warrior mighty presents send?
“ Shou’d I receive the gift, it will enrage
“ The king, the army, th’ Iranian sage.
“ Shou’d I return them, Zal, with furious ire,
“ Darts as the Semurgh his vindictive fire.”
Thus Saum reflects, as, when o’erpow’r’d by wine,
The tott’ring mind can fix on no design.
He folds his arms, he bends his thoughtful head;
“ Let all these presents,” thus the warrior said,

“ Now

“ Now to the treasurer of Zal be giv’n,
“ From Kabul’s moon, the brightest orb of heav’n !”
Fair Scendocht, blooming, smiles with new-born charms,
The gift accepted ceases all alarms,
(She whisper’d to her soul) and by her side
Three beauties glow’d, fair nature’s boasted pride !
Their necks the scented jessamine exceed,
Their taper waists surpass the slender reed ;
In rank arrang’d before the chief they stand,
A cup of rubies beam in either hand.
They place them at his feet, and then retire.
Scendocht thus spoke with renovated fire ;
“ Prop of the battle ! hero of the war !
“ Fam’d in the course ! Oh ! bright Zeistania’s star !
“ From thee religion draws her purest beams,
“ From thee the priest improves the pious themes.
“ The world enlighten’d, vice expell’d by thee,
“ And heav’n is open’d by thy wise decree.
“ Has Mehrab err’d, the purple drops distil
“ From his sad eyes, and all his mansion fill.

“ But

- “ But what dire crimes has Kabul’s sons design’d,
“ To cause such vengeance in thy mighty mind ?
“ They are submits ; with fav’ring eye behold
“ The mourning city ere the flames are roll’d.
“ Then dread the great disposer of our fates,
“ For strength and wisdom he alone creates.
“ From him the sun, and moon, and Venus shines,
“ All nature moves, and all the starry signs.
“ Sure horror cannot please thy martial care,
“ Clasp not the girdle of destructive war.”——
“ Say,” Saum replies, “ without deceit unfold,
“ Where Mehrab’s daughter Zal did first behold ?
“ Describe the maid : if fair, if blooming, wife,
“ Tall as the cypress, and of radiant eyes.”——
“ Ah ! chief benevolent !” the queen replies,
“ First pledge thy word, attested by the skies,
“ All nature hear it ! that on me or mine
“ No injury or wrong will Saum design.
“ Vast are my treasures, and my palace great,
“ My kindred num’rous : then, unaw’d by fate,

“ I will

“ I will elucidate whate’er you claim ;
“ All Kabul’s treasure shall increase your fame.”
Saum pledg’d his faith, attested by the skies :
The queen low bends, in private thus replies :
“ In me, O ! warrior, Mehrab’s queen behold !
“ Rodahver is the moon, whose charms control’d
“ The heart of Duftan : and by day or night
“ Thee and the king our constant pray’rs unite.
“ To your high tents I came to hear your will,
“ To paint our sorrow, and your wish fulfil.
“ And if I err, unworthy of a throne,
“ Suppliant behold me, helpless and alone !
“ Here pierce the dagger, or in fetters lay ;
“ But burn not Kabul, nor the guiltless flay.
“ Shou’d’st thou expel my grief, the gloom of night,
“ Great is thy glory, and thy trophies bright.”
Th’ attentive Saum perceiv’d what wisdom flow’d
In all her speech, where manly courage glow’d :
Saw her fair face all blooming as the spring,
Tall as the cypress, all the graces wing

Around

Around her slender shape, and in her mien
A pheasant moving graceful o'er the green.
“ Though pale destruction hover'd o'er my head,
“ My pledge is sacred ;” thus the warrior said ;
“ Thee and thy race, secure from all alarm,
“ Shou'd live in peace, exempt from ev'ry harm.
“ I wish the union, though of varying race,
“ Yet still deserving of imperial grace.
“ Thus the world acts, no shame to this is giv'n,
“ This breathes no wrong to yon refulgent heav'n.
“ Some live in splendor, some in humble state,
“ Wealth show'rs on some, and some oppress'd by fate.
“ Fortune on others pours her fav'ring smile,
“ And some all wretched view their frustrate toil.
“ Yet all alike sink in the empty urn ;
“ From dust they sprung, to dust they will return.
“ For thee I toil ; to favour thy request,
“ Late I a letter to the king addrest.
“ There painted all my cares ; brave Dustan bore
“ On wings the letter to Irania's shore,
“ So

- “ So swift he bounded on his foaming horse,
“ Like winds he vanish’d rapid o’er the course.
“ Great Munochere will give the prompt reply,
“ And wipe the tear still flowing in the eye.
“ Dustan enamour’d, by his passions tost,
“ By grief bewilder’d, is in sorrow lost.
“ Thus the lone traveller, o’erpow’r’d by toil,
“ Entangled, strives to pass the deep’ning foil.
“ So loud lamenting fair Rodahver sighs,
“ Fate shou’d unite them in connubial ties.
“ Say, cou’d she view the brave, the dragon boy,
“ What treasures wou’d she give to speed her joy?”

Thus having said, the blooming queen rejoins;

- “ Thy son, O! warrior, with such lustre shines,
“ My soul will reach the skies whene’er you lead
“ The chief to Kabul on his bounding steed.
“ Shou’d Kabul view him on her regal seat,
“ I lay my life, my treasures at his feet.”

Scendocht beholds the warrior smile with joy,

That rage no longer does his thoughts employ.

A nimble-footed messenger she sends ;
 Quick as the air to Mehrab's dome he bends :
 The pleasing news she orders to declare,
 Bids him be happy, and the feast prepare ;
 " Soon shall I follow. To the chief relate
 " The secret spring of wonder-working fate."
 The second day, when man retires from rest,
 And the sun's beams delight each mortal breast.
 The queen, beneficent, to Saum repairs,
 Who sports with thrones ; while all the throng declares
 The plaudits of the queen. To Saum she bows,
 And asks permission, breathing grateful vows,
 To see her lord ; and to arrange the feast
 For her great guest, the planet of the east !
 " Go," he reply'd, " to warlike Mehrab tell
 " The pleasing tale, and all his grief expel.
 " Tell him the faith I swore : the gifts display'd
 " For Mehrab, Scendocht, and the beauteous maid."
 All that can please, and all that Zabul yields,
 From his rich mansions, and his cultur'd fields,

The warrior gave : " Thy gifts I take with joy,

" The nuptial rites unite the dragon boy

" With our fair daughter ; and thy pledge I bear."

Thus spoke the queen ; and thus the chief of war,

" In peace depart, and let no anxious fears

" Oppress thy thoughts to cause thy flowing tears."

Her face all radiant with celestial bloom,

Seeks her own house, exulting in her doom.

THE ARGUMENT.

*Zalzer goes to Iran—His reception at the court of Munochere—
The king directs the astrologers to declare the future destiny of the son
of Saum—The sages predict the birth of Rustem from the union of
Zal and Rodahver—Munochere convenes the sages, who propose
enigmatic questions to Zalzer—His solution of them—Munochere
commands the warriors to the field, where Zalzer distinguishes himself
—The presents of the king—The letter of Munochere to Saum—
Zalzer quits Iran, and transmits a narrative to Saum of his success—
The festivals in Kabul—The arrival of Zal in the camp of Saum, who
announces to Mehrab their intentions of marching to Kabul—The
union of Zal and Rodahver—The distress of Zal, who, recollecting the
promise of the Semurgh, burns the feather—The Semurgh descends,
and directs what operations are essential for the safety of the queen—
The wonderful birth of Rustem—The image of the boy sent in proces-
sion to Saum, who marches to Kabul—The address of Saum on seeing
his grandson—The magnanimous reply of Rustem.*

T H E

S H Â H N A M Ê H.

B O O K VIII.

SOON as th' imperial monarch heard the news,
That Dustan to Iran his way pursues,
The nobles crowd the gallant youth to bring :
All cede the path as he approach'd the king.
When in the presence, bowing to the ground,
In lofty notes the royal praises found.

Still

Still on the earth his eyes submissive bend,
The monarch smil'd, and spoke his youthful friend ;
“ Dustan, arise, (and musk around he threw)
“ Say, by what mode did Zal his march pursue
“ 'Through such dire paths.’—“ From thee, O king of kings!
“ The warrior springs, all mortal splendor springs.
“ 'Tis thy supreme decree that guards the way,
“ 'Though mild in peace, a lion in the fray.’
He gave the letter, which the monarch read,
Who instant to the heir of Zabul said :
“ My mind in mazes thy entreaty leads,
“ Yet I accord, thy father's bosom bleeds !
“ Howe'er reflection shou'd my thoughts employ,
“ No longer I oppose thy nuptial joy.”
The table spread, the genial feast begun,
The king was seated with the hero's son.
The nobles, sages of illustrious line,
The king commands shou'd in the banquet join.
In the imperial room the flowing bowl,
With fragrant wines, delight the gen'rous soul.

The

The banquet clos'd; the glorious son of Saum
Mounts his fierce steed, and with the praises warm
Of Iran's king. In his imperial breast
Benevolence and glory stood confest.

Just when the sun had tipt the dewy lawn,
Zal clasps his girdle with the early dawn.

On the high chief, the victor king he waits;

Who bids th' astrologers, well vers'd in fates,

And all th' intelligent, the sapient seers,

To read the stars, and Dufstan's future years.

Much they consult, compute the secret springs

Of pregnant fate, which rules all mortal things.

Three days they gave to study deep profound,

With tables astronomical renown'd.

From Greece they waited on Irania's king,

And thus address him: "Fav'ring news we bring;

"For by computing all the starry theme,

"Clear and transparent flows the lucid stream.

"From Zal and fair Rodahver there will rise

"A glorious hero, brilliant, brave, and wise!

"His

“ His life will years unnumber'd greatly shine,
“ Fierce and athletic, glory of his line !
“ So great a warrior heav'n did ne'er behold ;
“ In fight intrepid, and in danger bold !
“ Unequall'd in the course ; whene'er his steed
“ Bounds o'er the breathless trains, the foe will bleed ;
“ The tow'ring eagle sinks with drooping wing ;
“ The chief superior to each earthly king.
“ Tall and majestic ! ev'ry foe will fall ;
“ On him will wait the monarchs of the ball.
“ Irania's warriors will the chief protect,
“ And burn the infidels' unfaithful sect.
“ From his sharp sword o'er ev'ry hostile plain
“ Blood will in purple streams terrific rain.”
The King of kings then calls the warlike youth,
T' explore his knowledge, and explain the truth.
Anxious to sound the phantoms of his mind,
In things mysterious, and by age refin'd.
The sage were seated in the royal hall,
With them the monarch, the sagacious Zal.

A sage

A sage thus spoke; (the fate all-knowing seers
Each in their turn) "Say, what to thee appears
"Twelve cypress trees, majestic, tall, and high,
"That verdant tow'r luxuriant to the sky?" —
Nor more nor less, for so the Parsees teach,
The thirty branches ever shoot from each.
Another sage then spoke: "Two steeds appear,
"One white and splendid as the chrystal clear,
"One the black sea resembling; though they speed
"With rapid steps, the course will neither lead." —
Then thus the third: "What thirty horsemen ride
"For months and weeks, and when you wou'd decide,
"One more you find when they are number'd right
"Than what appears perceptible to fight?" —
The fourth continu'd: "Say, what is that grove,
"Verdant where flows the stream, and songsters rove?
"A man athletic, with majestic mien,
"Enters, with sharpen'd hook, the sylvan scene,
"Levels the grove; if with persuasive strain
"You strive to stop him, all the labour's vain." —

"What are," another sage the chief addrest,
 "Two lofty cypresses? (on each a nest)
 "Like reeds they shoot up in the limpid stream,
 "The bird there morn and eve attunes his theme;
 "The one he quits all moisture flies and bloom,
 "The one he perches on is musk perfume:
 "Of these two trees, one shows the verdant leaves,
 "One, dry and wither'd, forrowing droops and grieves."—

Another sage then questions of a town,
 Of strength and magnitude, and high renown,
 That on a mountain, he, the sage, had seen,
 Whose people dwelt upon the fickle green:
 To the pale moon their lofty buildings dawn'd,
 And, self-adorers, worship'd what they form'd;
 Their native town employ'd their mind no more;
 Sudden a dust arose and tempests roar,
 Obscure their country, then their anxious thought
 The former city to their mem'ry brought.—

"What is that grove," a diff'ring sage rejoins,
 "Whose odours charm, where various beauty shines?"

"Where

- “ Where the dry grafs appears, and pleasing green,
 “ Where musk and camomile perfume the scene;
 “ With the sharp scythe, when, lo! a man there came,
 “ With rage and hatred stamp’d upon his frame,
 “ Of ease regardless, dry and moist he mows,
 “ Nor sleep he heeds, nor rest a moment knows?
 “ These are mysterious; do thou, gallant youth!
 “ Announce the riddles, and declare the truth.
 “ These enigmatic secrets if you solve,
 “ Then the black earth shall into musk revolve.
- Now Dustan’s mind reflection deep possess,
 He knits his brows, and bends his thoughtful breast.
 Then thus he answer’d to the sage decrees:
- “ Each thirty branches, the twelve lofty trees,
 “ Are the twelve moons or months in ev’ry year,
 “ Like monarchs on new thrones these moons appear.
 “ Each month revolving counts twice fifteen days;
 “ So the world passes, and so time decays.
 “ Now the two steeds which like the light’ning shine,
 “ One white and black, which follow in a line,

- " 'Tis day and night, that ever pass along,
 " Nor stop a moment with this earthly throng.
 " Neither will foremost in the chase appear,
 " Though fleet and rapid as the hunted deer.
 " The thirty horsemen of the third wife fear,
 " That fly o'er months and weeks, and will appear
 " One less in number, yet, when counted right,
 " Is found again, and evident as light;
 " This bears a reference to the months' decrease,
 " When by our rules a night will often cease.
 " Now on that question be my speech address'd,
 " Where on two cypresses the bird will nest:
 " Aries to Libra still the world conceals,
 " Its darkness hid, and only light reveals,
 " When it returns, and enters in the whale,
 " Through the whole realm the luminaries fail.
 " The cypress trees are the two poles of heav'n,
 " From which both joy and grief are ever giv'n:
 " The bird that perches on the trees may seem
 " Yon radiant sun. The next unravell'd theme,
 " That

- " That mystic city on the mountain height,
 " (That erst appeared to the sage's sight)
 " Is paradise alone, the judgement hour,
 " This city is the world and human pow'r:
 " Where sometimes pleasures, sometimes wealth abound,
 " Where pain and poverty are often found;
 " It deems your residence an airy dream,
 " A transient blessing, a delusive beam.
 " A wind arises, and the earthquakes roar,
 " While loud complaints are pour'd from ev'ry shore;
 " We grieve to quit the town elysium styl'd,
 " And go unwilling to the thorny wild.
 " Though any one in grief lament our fate,
 " Soon will he follow, soon will change his state.
 " Such was the world from time's remotest day,
 " Thus it goes on, yet does not waste away.
 " If emulous of worth and virtue's friend,
 " Blest is the soul, and happy in its end.
 " But if through life is stamp'd a vicious state,
 " Self-evident will be our future fate.

" Although

" Although the palace reach to Saturn's sphere,
 " A winding sheet will all our lot appear
 " To shade the lifeless face and clay-cold breast;
 " And the wan head by dust will be possess'd.
 " This is the place of fear; the men the wild,
 " The scythe that dry and moist alike despoil'd,
 " Who levels both the wither'd and the green,
 " Unmov'd by pray'r, and equally ferene,
 " This man's the world; we mortals are the grass,
 " To whom alike the fire and children pass,
 " Who views both age and youth with equal eye,
 " Hunts all the game, and none the scythe can fly.
 " Such are the ways and manners of the world;
 " All born to die are into atoms hurl'd.
 " 'Tis but to pass he enters at the door,
 " Goes through the other, and is heard no more.
 " Oh! then reflect that in a moment flies
 " The transitory scene:" thus Zal replies.
 The sages, wond'ring, heard the well-solv'd truth.
 With notes of praise the monarch hail'd the youth.

A splendid

A splendid festival the king ordains,
 Bright as the moon on the ethereal plains;
 Till eve the flowing bowl elates their veins!
 The herald spoke; when rising from their seat,
 From the king's palace all the guests retreat.
 The heroes rose, when o'er the mountain's height
 The solar rays burst forth in glorious light.
 Then Zal accout'ed, with majestic mien,
 Like the bold lion stalking o'er the green,
 Waits on the king, permission to request
 To visit Saum: and thus the chief address:
 " Oh! king beneficent! to view my fire
 " Glows ev'ry thought, as duty shou'd inspire.
 " I kiss thy iv'ry throne, supremely blest!
 " Let now thy victor mandates stand confest."
 To him the king: " In Iran still remain,
 " 'Tis not thy fire, Rodahver fills the vein.
 " Order the clarion, cymbal, to the field;
 " Let the loud trumpet found: the lance and shield,
 " The

“ The mace, the scymitar, the chief shall grace,
“ Till joy irradiates on each warlike face.”——
With bows and arrows all the captains shine,
And marks were made as when in martial line,
The forces move. Each chief in various arms,
Spurs on his steed, and glows at the alarms.
There stood an ancient palm tree on the plain ;
Now Dustan draws the bow, the sinews strain.
His courser springs, impetuous as the sea ;
The well-aim'd arrow pierces through the tree.
Another arrow flew, though lost it stood,
And deeply buried in the wounded wood.
Some seiz'd the pond'rous spear, and some a shield,
While mighty Zalzer thunders o'er the field ;
He braves the boldest to an equal fray,
Who dare dispute the honour of the day.
He rais'd his jav'lin ; to this novel game
Three warriors fell, and rais'd the hero's name.
“ Who now,” the king exclaims, “ his force will dare ?
“ Let all oppose this victor of the war.”

The

The chiefs agree, although they spoke in jest,
By indignation were their minds possest.
With flowing reins, and with the polish'd spear,
The combatants advance, unmov'd by fear.
Zal urges on his steed, he kens the course
To mark what warrior skilful rein'd the horse:
Then like a leopard through the crowd he springs,
He seiz'd his girdle, while his armour rings,
And from the saddle lifted him on high;
Loud acclamations rend the vaulted sky.
The king of kings, the crowd, stood all amaz'd;
On such a chief what mortal ever gaz'd?
O'er all his foes the parent's tear will flow,
And such a son no lion chief will know.
No mortal he; the water-dragon's force
His strength exceeds; how skilful in the course!
Saum's name shall live engrav'd in such a son;
The monarch prais'd, the chiefs his glories sung.
Such gifts the king prepar'd, the warriors gaz'd;
With the rich presents all the palace blaz'd.

A costly crown, a throne of burnish'd gold,

A necklace, bracelets, dazzling to behold !

The golden girdle, and the splendid zone,

The rich tiara, and the costly throne.

Then thus to Saum the king of kings addrest ;

“ Be ev'ry wish by warlike Saum possrest !

“ Oh ! chief renown'd ! triumphant o'er the foe !

“ I thought, I knew, thy fame wou'd ever grow.

“ So brave a son ne'er blest a mortal's fight,

“ First in the throng in wisdom and in fight !

“ Attractive is his form ! your plans succeed ;

“ His soul is in them ; and the rite's decreed.

“ For many a day thy son I here detain'd,

“ And saw that virtue in his actions reign'd.

“ From the brave lion bounding o'er the chase,

“ Who hunts the leopard in the lordly race.

“ What but an offspring, valiant as the fire,

“ Can spring, and act as glory will inspire ?

“ I hence dismiss him eminently gay ;

“ From him each hostile arm be far away !”

Zal now departs, high tow'ring o'er the trains,
And quick to Saum he sends these happy strains :
“ With joy the royal presence I depart,
“ With regal gifts, a crown, each work of art.
“ With necklace, bracelets, and an ivory throne,
“ And ev'ry princely bounty is my own.”
So blest was Saum to read the blisful style,
Youth gave his age a renovated smile.
An envoy to Mehrab imparts the news,
The king and chiefs assented to his views,
When Zal arrives, for Kabul we depart,
And fix the union of the lover's heart.
The news swift flew, and eccho fill'd the sail,
Mehrab exulted in the pleasing tale.
Blest as when ebbing life returns again,
Or renovated age exempt from pain.
Treasures were scatter'd, and the tuneful throng
Taught mirth and harmony to fill the song.
New joy irradiates o'er Kabulia's lord ;
Each lip was young, all smil'd with one accord.

He called Scendocht, the elegant and fair,
 And thus addrest her: "By thy sapient care,
 " Illustrious confort! is the darken'd gloom
 " For ever fled, and bright our future doom.
 " Aloft the praises of Irania's king
 " Tune to our wishes, high our glories wing.
 " Say, from what source such wisdom fill'd your breast,
 " Such sage reflection on your thoughts imprest?
 " And now the feast prepare, the choral band;
 " Thine are my treasures and the scepter'd land."
 This Scendocht heard, and, smiling, hastes away,
 To tell her daughter of the glorious day.
 " The blest event," the tender mother cries,
 " Beams o'er your life; no more will pensive sighs
 " Disturb your days, no more shall you repine;
 " Let joy succeed, the hero will be thine!"
 The fair Rodahver caught th' inspiring glow,
 And thus reply'd; "From thee my raptures flow.
 " Hail, beauteous queen! the universal praise
 " Of all mankind will sing thy beaming rays.

“ Thy

“ Thy feet my pillow, and thy will my fate ;

“ The evil genius sinks before thy state.

“ My heart the seat of ev’ry human joy !

“ Now pleasures only can my mind employ.”

The queen commands that all the regal seats,

The splendid gardens, and the green retreats,

Display a new elysium to the sight ;

A dazzling scene ! and radiant as the light !

The richest essence and each sweet perfume,

With musk and amber, scent the royal room ;

The decorated pillars rise in gold,

With emeralds studded, beautiful to behold !

Commands, festoon’d with pearl, a golden throne,

And such as China’s artists form alone.

Rubies around the footstool splendid beam,

And set with gems, the painter’s happiest theme.

The throne Kianian ! here Rodahver, drest

In all her charms, and in elysian vest,

Sat like an angel, and so fair she seem’d,

The fascinated sun no longer beam’d.

No mortal here approach'd. Kabulia's plains
Resplendent shone with decorated trains.
The painted elephants, the slaves well drest,
The vocal minstrels, and the loaded chest,
The martial nobles crown'd; in pomp elate
Prepar'd to meet the prince in splendid state.
As the swift bird that does outstrip the gale,
Or ships that plough the waves with swelling sail,
So Zal with rapid speed wings on his way,
Saum hears the tale, and blest the happy day.
He meets his darling boy; in fond embrace
Clasp'd the young hero, glory of his race!
Dustan obedient bends, and to his fire
Relates the past with animated fire.
When Saum of Scendocht speaks with smiling mien:
“ Lately a female messenger serene,
“ A pledge from me with pleasing rapture bore,
“ (Never her foe;) to Kabul's anxious shore.
“ This pledge, the union of our neighb'ring lands,
“ That Saum shou'd visit, that united hands,
“ Absolve

- “ Absolve her woes, and late an envoy came,
“ Announcing all prepar’d to meet your flame.
“ Say, what reply to Mehrab shall I send;
“ Declar’d a foe, or be announc’d a friend?”

The happy Dufan glow’d with blushing joy,

- “ If Saum approves; does this his thoughts employ?
“ Obedient to his will with quick accord,
“ I bear his mandates to Kabulia’s lord.”

The old chief smil’d, the ardour he approves.

- “ Nor Zal,” he cries, “ without Rodahver moves.
“ No rest, no slumber on his couch appears,
“ Unless Rodahver vibrates on his ears.
“ The tymbal, and the Indian bell prepare,
“ Pitch the high tents, and to a warrior’s care
“ Commit the message, and to Mehrab send;
“ Quick let him fly, and tell our mutual friend
“ That Saum and Dufan, with Zabulia’s train,
“ Immediate march to Mehrab’s fertile plain.”

The envoy speeds; the fife and drum proclaim

The monarch’s glory, and the lover’s flame.

On royal elephants the music play'd,
The earth again appear'd th' elysian shade.
The trains in rapture fill'd the tuneful song,
Bright as the glances of the dancing throng.
The waving colours fly; the yellow bright,
The blushing red, the violet, and the white;
The breathing flute, the tymbal sounds on high,
The cymbal, and the clarions reach the sky.
This hour of joy unnumber'd shouts display
As at the time of judgement's awful day:
Thus mov'd the trains: to Saum Kabulia goes;
The chiefs embrace, and various converse flows.
Mehrab in plaudits speaks the praise of Saum;
And Zal's high virtues all his bosom warm.
The chiefs march on; on beauteous steeds they ride,
As when the moon in all her rising pride
Tips the tall mountain; thus the heroes shine,
In stature tow'ring o'er the martial line.
Blest in completed wish they reach the town,
Where Mehrab reign'd; and where a golden crown

On

On Duftan's head the brave Kabulian plac'd,
And the gay fcene with ev'ry trophy grac'd.
All nature teem'd with harmony divine,
And mufic floated o'er the fparkling wine.
Scendocht approach'd; " Say when, illuftrious queen,
" Shall fair Rodahver gild the fplendid fcene?"
Thus Saum addrest; and Scendocht leads the king
To the bright beauty, and the flow'ring fpring.
There in the golden room, the chief amaz'd
With rapture at the moony fair one gaz'd.
Yet knew no language to exprefs his praife,
Her charms tranfcendent, her illumin'd rays.
Mehrab advanc'd; in native rites he gave
The lovely princefs to the warrior brave:
Gave nuptial presents; and then plac'd the pair,
Glowing with tranfport, on the regal chair.
Rapture fat fmiling on the warrior's face;
He views his confort, bleft with ev'ry grace.
This is the maid! his thoughts in fecret roll,
The fascinating fairy of the foul!

In blushing glances she beheld her lord ;
When all depart, and night, with love's accord,
Stole flyly on, then Zal the fair addrest,
And thus the raptures of his soul exprest :
(Rodahver seem'd a Houri, heav'nly bright !
And Zal's bright eye appear'd the rays of light.)
“ Fate smiles at length propitiate on our flame,
“ And future bliss shall crown our spotless fame.”
With eager eye her scented, musky hair,
Her form of elegance, her gracious air,
Dustan entranc'd beholds : he clasp'd her arms,
Prest her soft lips, all conscious of her charms !
How shall the bard the lover's joys impart,
Or paint their fondness, their united heart ?
With the first dawn the happy warrior rose ;
And bathing, pray'd, the solar planet glows.
When Zal returning to his beauteous bride ;
The gallant Mehrab, glitt'ring by his side,
Amazing treasures gave : succeeding days
In festive joy on rich pavilions blaze.

The mighty warriors in the presence sat ;
Till Zal retiring to Zeistania's state,
With his fair bride, and Scendocht the divine,
When Saum, delighted with his warlike line,
Yeilding his kingdom on his blooming heirs,
To Backsher and Kergerferan repairs.
Many a day in elevated joy
The lovers pass, and all their hours employ.
When fair Rodahver gave the blisful sign,
To make Zal parent of a beauteous line.
But soon, alas ! ill health her frame invades ;
The roses fly, and all her beauty fades.
“ Why, why so wan ? ” the tender mother cry'd,
“ Nor day or night I rest,” the queen reply'd ;
“ The fear of death alarms my anxious care,
“ I dread the mighty burden that I bear.”
Yet soft repose her pensive mind restores,
The Pow'r Omniscient pious Zal implores.
When on a morn the fainting princess pale,
Sinks on the ground, and all her senses fail.

Pale Scendocht heard the news, the plaintive fair,
Wild with her grief, rends her dishevell'd hair.
Those jetty tresses, where the rich perfume,
Of playful odours scents the musky room.
The mournful tale to Duftan was convey'd,
That the tall cypress wither'd and decay'd.
Now near Rodahver's pillow, dew'd in tears,
The yellow Zal with anguish'd grief appears.
Torn is his soul by frantic sorrows prest:
He clasps his hands and beats his swol'n breast.
The faithful servants in their cares unite,
Run round their queen, a miserable sight!
Much Zal revolves, by adverse fate oppress'd,
Though sapient contemplation leads to rest,
When recollective of the Semurgh's strain,
The promis'd feather to relieve his pain.
O'er all his face the smile of hope is seen;
He speaks his thoughts to the distracted queen.
The kettle brought, high blaz'd the mounting flame,
Burnt was the feather; in an instant came

The

The shrouded Semurgh in a cloud array'd,
Where all the lustre of a gem's display'd.
Such gems as glitter radiant on the breast;
To Zal she came with happy omens blest.
She prais'd the chief, for him her fervent pray'rs,
And Zal to her his gratitude declares.
The Semurgh spoke; " Why grieves the warlike chief
" Why are the lion's eyes bedew'd in grief?
" From this fair cypress, from thy moony dame,
" Shall spring a hero of immortal fame,
" When the brave warrior views his manly form,
" His mighty club, and the resistless storm,
" Prostrate he falls; his voice shall spread alarm,
" And ev'ry warrior tremble at his arm.
" Gay at the banquet he like Saum will shine,
" A martial lion in th' embattl'd line:
" In stature the tall cypress will he prove,
" In strength the chief an elephant will move;
" Two miles a brick the future chief will throw,
" Victor of worlds! triumphant o'er the foe!

" By

- “ By God’s high favour will his glories blaze,
“ And Zal will triumph in his glorious rays,
“ Bring the sharp knife, a skilful artist chuse,
“ Then through the lady’s veins bright wine infuse,
“ Do thou attend; extract the child, and place
“ The future hero in a wooden case.
“ Then cut the hollow in the lady’s side;
“ All pain shall cease, and ev’ry care subside.
“ Then sew th’ incision, tranquilize your mind,
“ Dread no alarm, be ev’ry fear resign’d.
“ Pound milk and musk with grass, be these convey’d,
“ And dry’d the three together in the shade.
“ To the incision thou this salve apply,
“ Soon will it heal, and charm thy anxious eye.
“ Then take this feather, rub it o’er the wound:
“ The shadow of my glory is renown’d!
“ Do thou rejoice, high triumph at my strain,
“ And in the presence of the king remain.
“ ’Twas he who gave thee this imperial dame,
“ To raise thy splendor, and adorn thy name.

“ Let

“ Let not thy heart with fearful anguish shoot,
“ Thy faithful branches are furcharg’d with fruit.”
She spoke, and from her wing a feather throws :
Exalted Zal with grateful fervour glows :
He takes the feather, when the Semurgh flies ;
And Zal, submits, the remedy applies.
Amazing operation ! wond’rous deed !
One world beholds it, all their senses bleed.
The purple drops fell from the eyes of Seen.
Oh ! strange idea ! From the parent queen,
From her fair side to take the infant child
A skilful artist waits ; with tremor wild,
The queen, the beauty, drinks the flowing bowl ;
Cut is the side, no pain oppress her soul.
He turn’d the infant’s head, and when he saw
The wondrous birth, above all nature’s law,
The youthful lion charm’d the gazing sight ;
Of lofty stature, eminently bright !
All stood amaz’d ; no mortal ever knew
An infant like the elephant in view.

For

For days and nights th' intoxicated queen,
Was lost in flumber, ev'ry sense serene.
They sew th' incision; and the order'd balm
Healing all pain, produc'd a tranquil calm.
When she awoke, rich presents she bestow'd;
To him, the Lord of all, her praises flow'd.
They bring the child, exalt it to the skies;
The queen arose, and opes her radiant eyes;
She sees the burden from her womb remov'd,
And eyes the manly child, by all approv'd.
The lovely boy whose skin was heav'nly fair,
Roseate his cheeks, and black his infant hair.
His breast like jessamine; the boy appears
As if two summers saw his infant years.
Thus hyacinths and tulips sweetly rise,
And floreate gardens beautify the skies.
Rodahver smil'd, and in her son she view'd
Majestic grace, and thus the theme pursu'd:
" Clos'd are my labours." And from this the name
Of Rustem rose, the glorious chief of fame!

Zal and Rodahver glow'd with raptur'd joy,
 Conven'd the fage ; in semblance of the boy,
 They form'd a figure of a child of silk,
 Who ne'er had tasted yet the parent's milk.
 Stuff'd with the weasel's soft and furry hair,
 And on the cheek was Venus painted fair,
 All brilliant with the sun, and on the arm
 A dreadful snake ; the lion's claws alarm
 Depicted on his hand, in which appear'd
 A waving standard ; while the other rear'd
 A bridle high ; on a dun horse they place,
 And lead the image with the lion's grace.
 (Throngs of attendants crowd around the horse,
 Large gifts were thrown in honour of the course.)
 This martial figure was to Zal convey'd,
 Young Rustem's image borne in great parade.
 A jubilee in ev'ry garden blaz'd :
 Hence to Kabul the voice of joy was rais'd.
 While wine and music flow'd on ev'ry plain,
 And jovial crowds unite their blissful strain.

Mehrab enraptur'd the vast gift bestows,
And the poor mendicant forgets his woes.
Through Zabul music aids the vocal train,
Yet still more num'rous through Zeistania's reign.
Each tongue of Rustem, with his praise resounds,
The roads were crowded from the distant bounds.
The gazing travellers, the way along
In numbers meet, as when the village throng
To market crowd; nor did the lower class
In numbers the nobility surpass.
As interwoven threads the crowds unite,
Before great Saum, the image in his sight,
The grand procession moves; astonish'd Saum
Eyes the fine figure, and with rapture warm,
" Behold the semblance of myself," he cries,
" This boy will one day reach the azure skies,
" And stride along the earth." Rich gifts he gave,
High as the image did his presents wave.
The founding drums beat high; far blazing light
Illuminates the plain, refulgent, bright!

The

The king commands that Sugfer, dog-like town,
And fierce Mazinderan, the victor's crown,
Shou'd blaze with light; while gifts profusely gay
To skilful dancers, and the minstrels lay,
The warrior gave: so splendid was the feast,
The moon descended with the beaming east.
Now Saum to Zal replies; and in the line
His soul was painted; to the Pow'r Divine
High flow'd his plaudits for his blissful days,
Next to his son deserving all his praise.
“ The image I have seen, there greatly springs
“ The force of heroes, and the fame of kings.”
(He now commands to keep the boy sublime
Exempt from danger or the varying clime.)
“ For such a child in secret have I pray'd;
“ For such a child implor'd celestial aid.
“ While flow'd my tide of life I might behold
“ From thee an offspring, like his grandfire bold.
“ Now that he lives, what more can I desire?
“ The heir of glory like his martial fire.”

Swift as the wind the letter was convey'd
'To joyful Zal, whose eye such blifs display'd
At the glad strain, that his elated soul
Glow'd through his frame in one tumultuous roll.
'Transport to transport bore his mind on high,
His feet on earth, his head above the sky.
Ten nurses cherish'd the amazing youth;
'The principle of lions, manly truth,
And manly strength first mark'd his infant years,
When milk no more the mighty Rustem cheers,
With bread the mighty boy five sheep devours,
Mankind astonish'd ey'd his wond'rous pow'rs.
Eight years had pass'd, illustrious beam'd his fire,
As the tall cypress rising in a spire.
Resembling a bright star, which all the train
With wonder views, on the celestial plain.
In mien and stature like the hero Saum,
In wisdom, intellect, and mighty form.
Zal was his tutor in the letter'd rays,
'That fortune might adorn his future days.

When

When Saum the brave, resistless in his course,
Who guides through warring fields his furious horse,
First heard that Rustem like a lion grew,
That such a child no mortal ever knew,
Such strength, such courage, wonderful to view!
To clasp the lion boy high beat his veins,
He leaves a leader of his martial trains;
And with the chosen few his march begun,
To Zabul's realms, and his immortal son.
When Zal was told th' intentions of his fire,
The drums proclaim'd it, and with warlike fire
The num'rous forces blacken all the ground,
One plain of ebony appears around.
Now Mehrab, Zal, resolve to meet the king,
The signal giv'n, they the march begin.
On ev'ry side the joyful shouts began,
Through armies eager all the tumult ran.
Thus mountains rising in alternate spires,
Are lost to view while one to heav'n aspires.

Whole

Whole groves of shields of various hues unite,
The neighing steeds, and elephants of might
Resound for many a mile. One royal, strong,
Blaz'd with a golden howdah 'bove the throng.
On it was plac'd bright Zal's immortal son,
(The prize of glory, and of love he won.)
Whose limbs and stature the tall cypresses grac'd,
Crowns on his head, and zones around his waist.
High blaz'd his shield, and in his hand appear
The weighty jav'lin, and the pond'rous spear.
Mehrab and Zal precede the wond'rous child:
Like indigo the dust the chiefs defil'd.
But Rustem's face through clouds appear'd more bright,
Like the gay planet in meridian height.
When Saum from far, the mighty warriors shines,
The troops were rang'd in two embattl'd lines.
Mehrab and Zal alight; the old and young
Swift from their steeds with awful reverence sprung.
They bow their heads obedient to the ground,
The praise of Saum re-echoes all around.

Not

Not with more colour beams the blushing rose,

Than Saum at viewing the young hero glows.

The elephant approach'd, the warrior views

The mighty child, and thus the strain pursues :

“ Bleft be thy days ! for ever live in fame !

“ Thou valiant youth ! the glory of our name !

“ Thou son of Zal ! thou king of high renown !

“ Oh ! thou who merits an imperial crown !

“ Thou splendid moon ! be this thy mortal praise !

“ Like Saum thy glories, thou thyself may raise !”

Ruſtem ſubmiſſive bow'd, and, ſtrange to tell,

His grandfire's fame thus eloquently fell

From his young voice ; and to the youth around

Thus did his ſtrain, and thus the praise reſound :

“ For ever live, thou hero of the earth !

“ Thy branch am I, to thee I owe my birth.

“ Thou art the tree from whoſe illuſtrious root

“ Grows the ſtraight branch and the unerring ſhoot.

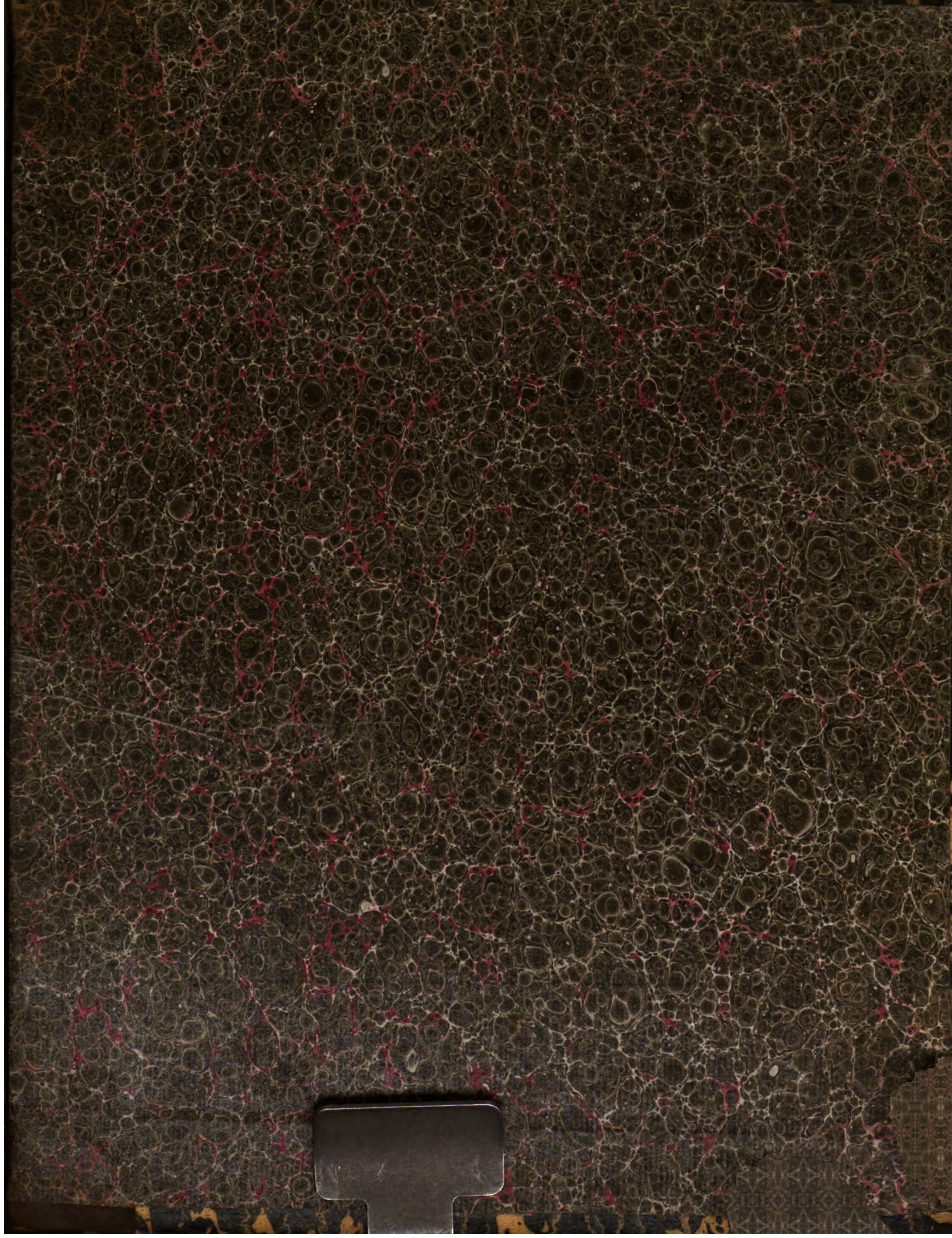
“ For ever and for ever may'ſt thou reign !

“ Thence flows my tranſports through the thrilling vein.

“ My

- " My time to ease, to sloth shall never yield;
 " Give me the courser, helmet, and the shield!
 " The spear, the jav'lin, I will dart along,
 " And break like thunder o'er the hostile throng.
 " Thy foes shall prostrate at thy footsteps bend,
 " Like thine my image and my fame ascend!"







Firdausī,

The poems of Firdusi

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